

FRIENDLY AND SEASONABLE
A D V I C E
TO THE
ROMAN CATHOLICS
OF
E N G L A N D.

BY THOMAS COMBER, D. D.
LATE DEAN OF DURHAM.

THE FIFTH EDITION,
WITH AN ADDITIONAL PREFACE.

L O N D O N :

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TO HIS
H O N O U R E D
AND
W O R T H Y F R I E N D
Mr. S. B.

CONCERNING A FORMER EDITION.

S I R,

I Cannot answer your inquiry, till
I have not only commended but
encouraged your charity to your
countrymen of the Roman commu-
nion ; it being an excellent piety to
endeavour to reduce them into the
right way, who are so confident in
the wrong. The zeal of most men
expresseth itself by fury and clamour
against Dissenters, whilst you shew
your esteem for the rational principles
a of

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of the church of England by your diligence to propagate them, and your desires to reconcile its misinformed adversaries to them. It is one of the great properties of goodness to be communicative, and a copy of St. Paul's most obliging charity, *Acts* xxvi, 29. to wish that all whom you converse with, were as happy in the choice of their faith, as you know yourself to be; wherefore that I may as well quicken your generous design, as invite some others to imitate so good an example, I will propound these few considerations:

1. The relation in which the English Romanists stand to us should excite our care; for they are all natives of the same country, subjects of the same government, and are called by the same general name of *Christians*; many of them our kind neighbours,
familiar

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familiar acquaintance, or near kindred; and some of them, where their prejudice doth not blind them, persons of great reason, and of so good inclinations, that they are not made vicious by the evil liberties which their principles do allow: and shall we for want of affection or courage suffer them to be kept in ignorance, and imposed on at present, and to be led blindfold in such a way as will extremely hazard the salvation of their precious souls hereafter? If all the relations they bear to us do possess us with any real affection for them, we cannot but do our utmost to undeceive them. The frauds indeed of the guides of that Church are daily more and more laid open, but for want of such a charity as yours is, they who are chiefly concerned seldom come to the knowledge of them: I am sure those excellent Pens which

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discovered them, did not design we should make their delusions the subject of our mirth, but the means to convert the souls of those that are linked to us in so many bonds, that it is a shame we should suffer them to be so deceived.

2. But we usually excuse our remissness, under the pretence that it is impossible to convert them ; had our ancestors so esteemed it, the world had wanted the blessing of the Reformation. I grant it is difficult, because of their rooted prejudice, and the policy of their leaders, yet not impossible, because many have undertaken it, and prevailed ; so that as Seneca saith in another case, “ it is not because of the difficulty that we do not attempt it, but because we do not attempt it, therefore it seems difficult.”*

* Sen. Ep. 104.

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The Philosopher tells us, “where there
“ is no difficulty, there is no opportu-
“ nity to exercise either art or virtue;”
and if we were once willing to take
some pains for so noble an end, it
would much allay the trouble thereof,
to consider the advantages which it
may bring, not only to the party
which is the object of our charity,
but to the church; yea, and to our
own souls also; for “he that convert-
“ eth a sinner from the error of his
“ way, shall save a soul from death,
“ and shall hide a multitude of sins,*”
“and they who turn many to righte-
“ ousness shall shine as the stars for
“ ever and ever †;” nay moreover,
if such pious endeavours should want
success on earth, they shall not fail of
a reward in heaven.

* Jam. v. 20.

† Dan. xii. 3.

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3. And finally, if we consider the unwearied industry of our adversaries in seducing, methinks, it should awaken our diligence, in strengthening the weak, and reducing such as are out of the way. It had been very strange if the Apostles should have been unwilling to travel for the propagation of the right faith, and the winning souls to heaven, when the Pharisees compassed sea and land to reconcile a Profelyte to their particular Sect; and yet alas! it is too often seen, “that the children of this world
“are wiser in their generation than
“the children of light*.” The Hermit Pambo, accidentally beholding a theatric woman dance exquisitely before a loose assembly at Alexandria, is said to have wept abundantly, to consider how much more pains she took

* Luke xvi. 18.

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to serve evil ends, than he himself did to serve God : had we as much tenderness as that holy man, doubtless we have as great occasion for our shame and sorrow, when we see others more active to advance the mystery of iniquity, than we are to promote the glory of God, and the salvation of our brethren's immortal souls.

These considerations, worthy Sir, I know have excited your charitable resolutions, and I hope will prevail with many others to endeavour the reformation of their deceived friends; wherefore that I may answer your desires, and contribute my poor assistance to so pious and generous a design, I have sent you the following papers, wherein the delusions of that party are discovered as plainly, yet as modestly as may be, that they may see in a little room how much it is their interest
and

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and advantage to embrace the true catholic Religion of the English church. I know all these particulars have been more fully handled by better pens, but most of these writings have been by way of dispute, and intended rather to convince than persuade; so that they may be very proper to give fuller satisfaction in any particulars doubted of, when their great prejudices are first a little removed; besides there are many through unavoidable business, company, or other divertisements, who either have no leisure or no inclination to read a larger volume, being of Callimachus's mind, that *A great book is a great evil* *, who yet may be prevailed with to spare one hour for so small an abstract as this. The Jewish Talmud tells us of a noble Heathen, who came to Rabbi

* Μέγα βιβλίον μέγα κακόν *apud Athenenenum.*

Hiltel,

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Hittel, and offered to become a Prose-lyte, if he could teach him the whole Law at one lesson, *Tract. Sab. fol. 31.* and if you meet with any of his mind, they may perhaps be gratified with this little abridgment, wherein the mistakes of the Roman persuasion are put into as narrow a compass as they can well be reduced to; so that even those who are yet resolved to be of that church may perhaps not be unwilling to peruse it, that they may at one view see what their Religion is charged with. And if it do not gain such persons, yet it will teach them to censure mildly, and to dissent from us with more moderation: and as the volume is small, and so may invite those to its perusal who are delighted with brevity, so the style is as mild as the matter would allow, and can give no just offence to any: the particulars are so plain, and so fully
proved

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proved more at large by others, that the author resolves not to dispute, but in pure charity to advise the Romanists not to resist apparent truth and reason, having no worse intentions towards them than to set them into the best way to heaven; and if any be angry at him or you for this, they are the greatest enemies to themselves, and more concerned for their present opinions, than for their everlasting salvation; but it is to be hoped the sincerity of your intention to do good may oblige some kindly to accept this Manual, at least as a testimony of your love; to whom, if you have the liberty of discourse, you shall do well to clear those exceptions which prejudice may suggest, and at least to obtain from them a resolution, impartially to enquire into the truth of that which they so confidently do believe: and sure, it is infinite pity that persons

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sons of excellent reason should be so much enslaved, as not to dare to ask the right way to blifs of any, but those who have an absolute dominion over them ; nor once to go about to judge for themselves in a case of so great concernment.

I would be loth to think so hardly of their superiours, as to suppose they interdicted their adherents from all converse with us ; for this were the exact parallel of the Muscovian policy, where it is death for any to travel out of their own kingdom without especial licence, for fear they should never endure their former bondage, when once they have seen the freedom of other nations : and if once you can prevail so far, that they will impartially compare their own opinions with ours, it is probable they may become our friends. I shall add no more but
to

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to wish this token may be as kindly
accepted as it will be charitably of-
fered by you, and to assure you, you
shall never want his prayers for your
success, who is,

Sir,

Yours to serve you.

T O

TO HIS
ESTEEMED FRIEND
Mr. *W. R.*

CONCERNING THE FOURTH EDITION.

S I R,

YOUR account of the speedy dispersing of this little tract, encourageth me to hope, it hath not only been acceptable to the world, but also, blessed be God, to the reducing some from the Roman opinions, and the establishing others in the Protestant faith; and that it may more effectually serve to these desirable ends, I have been content to obey your request, in reviewing it in order to another impression, which, you tell me, is now desired. In which review, I
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have rectified the method of the whole, and illustrated and strengthened every part, with the addition of so many of the most convincing instances and authorities as could be put in without too much swelling the bulk. I confess I did suppose the things to be so evident, and so plainly proved in larger discourses, that I was not curious before, always to bring proofs for my assertions; but now your letter acquaints me both that some Romanists, who resolve boldly to deny what they cannot otherwise evade, have questioned the truth of some parts of this charge; and also, that those Protestants, whose charity hath invited them to seek their friends' conversion, have desired I should add my authors to confirm these allegations: Therefore, for the full satisfaction of both parties, I have proved all the particulars by the testimony of such authors whose
evidence

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evidence is unquestionable, chusing usually the plain confessions of Popes and Cardinals, or other approved writers of the Roman church; that so those of that party may believe these matters from the mouth of those whom they esteem their best friends, which they would suspect, if we related upon our own credit, whom they unjustly account their enemies. And though their present Romish priests should deny those things, which the most eminent writers of their own church have formerly acknowledged, they are not to be doubted of upon that account, since the confession of their former writers against their own party is better evidence, than the denial of the later can be for it; for “no man will lie,” saith Tertullian, “to his own disgrace, but rather for his credit; and it is more fit to believe such as confess against themselves, than such as deny for

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themselves”* : So that none can justly doubt of these truths thus attested ; and he that once believes them, and yet retains the religion of Rome, must be of a humour differing from the rest of mankind, who cannot chuse a known delusion, nor delight in sitting under apparent abuses. I must expect the admirers of that once famous church will entertain these just and necessary accusations thereof with some little heats of passion ; but I hope it will calm those hasty motions when they deliberately consider, that since I say no more than truth, I do no injury to Rome, and the charity which I have for them obliges me to say so much. “And why,” saith the Philosopher, “art thou displeased at me who have done no more than a looking-glass doth to the deformed, having only shewed thee to thyself as thou

* Tertul. Apol. cap. 32.

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art? Shall the Physician be said to reproach him whose disease he discovers to him *? ” They will remember I hope that I have undertaken the office of a friendly counsellor, whose duty, according to the Grecian Sage, is, “ not to advise that which is most pleasing, but that which is most profitable † : ” And if in compliance with this rule I shall somewhat displease them to their advantage, I shall not only obtain a pardon, but merit their thanks also in the end. However I ask no more, than that, laying aside their prejudices, they will put on so much affection to their own real interest as to weigh the reasons and arguments upon which my *Advice* is grounded, and, if they be convincing and persuasive, I desire them not to

* Arrian. in Epiſt. l. 2. c. 14.

† Diog. Laert. in Vit. Solon.

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resist their own freedom, nor despise him that sincerely seeks their good ; but if they absolutely resolve the most rational and just motives shall not persuade them to alter their old opinions, I shall pity and pray for them, but can use no other methods in this case ; for it is *counsel* and not *command* which I give, since men should be reasoned and not forced into a right faith ; and would God the Roman church had never obtruded her opinions upon the world by any other means, but these gentle and rational persuasions, her neighbours then would not have had so just cause to complain of her. And now, Sir, since I write, and you and other zealous Protestants act by these fair methods, if our endeavours for our countrymen's conversion be not maliciously misconstrued, they cannot be censured to tend to the harm of any, but must be

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confessed to aim at the present and future happiness of all that we shall address ourselves to in this matter : And I shall rejoice if my pains herein may attain these blessed ends, and let you particularly understand how gladly I would encourage your love to the church of England, and comply with all your pious desires, since I am,

Sir,

your affectionate

and

faithful friend.

PREFACE

P R E F A C E

TO THE PRESENT EDITION.

THIS little tract is now republished from the printed copy of 1686, which was the fourth edition. The republication of a book which has been printed above a hundred years, may perhaps require some apology from the Editor; as in that long interval, a treatise of this sort, may be supposed to be revived out of due time: for it will undoubtedly be said, that the circumstances of the Roman Catholics, with respect to our civil government, are very different from what they were at the time this book was written. This objection we shall take into consideration by and by.

As

P R E F A C E, etc.

As the fourth Edition was published late in the reign of King James II. when his attempts upon the civil and religious constitution of this country were fast advancing towards a crisis; and the governing powers exerting their supposed authority without much controul; it may be wondered, that the author should venture with the public a piece of this complexion, especially as it is not concealed in the title-page from what press it issued.

The first Edition, as appears from the *Imprimatur*, was published March 20th, 1677. There is a tradition in Dr. Comber's family that it was written at the request of a Lady Fauconberg, who had a suspicion that her husband was about to be converted to the popish religion. It is said, however, that it had its effect upon that Lord,
for

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for whose use it was written, and that he desired Dr. Comber to print it.*

Dr. Comber, who after the Revolution was preferred to the Deanery of Durham, had employed his pen in exposing the errors of the church of Rome, during the time that the apprehensions of the return of Popery in the reign of Charles II. alarmed the public, and particularly the divines of the church of England, to such a degree, as to put them upon their guard against the projects of the Court, which manifestly had that tendency.

It is certain, that in those days the danger of the protestant Religion was

* This nobleman was Thomas, second Viscount Fauconberg, who was created Earl in the 1st of William and Mary, and continued a steady Protestant till his death, which happened December 31, 1700.—His lady was Mary, daughter of Oliver Cromwell, who survived her Lord.

very

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very great; but, though our apprehensions of any such events, at the present time may be laid asleep, it is certain that, whatever change there may be in the circumstances of the Roman Catholics of England, or in the course of so many years, there is no satisfactory evidence that their religious principles are not the same at this period, that they were in the reigns of the last Kings of the Stuart line. It is said by many persons, whose affection for the protestant Religion cannot be doubted, that the sanguinary spirit of Popery is in a great measure extinguished among the Roman Catholics of England, and we are willing to believe it may be so, and to presume that this may be one reason why the legislature made a late act in their favour; but, however that may be, we apprehend the case between the Protestants and the Papists
of

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of the present day has not been accurately stated.

The late act of Parliament may be considered as a kind of compact entered into with the Roman Catholics, stipulating to relieve them from certain penalties, and to allow them certain privileges, on condition of their pledging their fidelity to the present government, by taking the oath of allegiance to his Majesty, and his successors, &c. with a reservation however, of the Pope's supremacy in matters of Religion; a reservation more comprehensive, with respect to the rights and liberties of those who are not Roman Catholics, than, I believe, most people imagine. Canonical obedience to the Pope, or, if you please, to the church of Rome, is so described by the Casuists of that church, as not to be limited by any considerations

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ations of the civil kind. It should therefore seem to be necessary, for the Roman catholics of the present day, to make a solemn declaration, that by reserving the supremacy of the Pope, and of the church of Rome, they mean not to extend ecclesiastical authority beyond matters purely spiritual; and not to take advantage of conferring upon the Pope a civil power, upon the pretence, of that silly evasion, of his exercising it only *in ordine ad spiritualia*.

A Patriot of the last century (said to be Lord Somers) used to say, "*That if the common people of England once lost the cry against Popery, it would be the easiest matter in the world to take away their Liberty.*" The cry against Popery has, indeed, very sensibly declined; and, it may be said, that there is no appearance of our liberties being

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in any danger from the cessation of that cry.

The cry against Popery, indeed, was revived in the year 1780, with very unpleasing, and indeed unhappy circumstances, and accompanied with outrages, which no wise or good man would wish to have repeated ; but, I think, it is now pretty certain, that those extravagancies were by no means encouraged by those, who would have conducted a sober and ordinary application to the legislature for the repeal of some passages in the late act of Parliament, in favour of the Roman catholics.—Much has been said of that intended application, as if it betrayed a spirit of persecution in the undertakers.—We are, however, persuaded that nothing could be more false and invidious than such an imputation,

Popery

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Popery was the object of this petition, which these petitioners wanted to keep under; and not to put any hardships upon the individuals of that persuasion: particular persons, who profess the Romish religion, may have very different opinions of the power and authority of the Pope and of the church, to which they profess obedience. It is well known that many of them differ in their accounts of what denomination of men the church is supposed to consist; and it would be no unreasonable demand to require an explanation upon this head, from those who are the best able to give it, and which seems to be wanting to insure their sincerity, in pledging their allegiance to the civil government.

Popery in the abstract is built upon principles which have a malevolent
c 2 aspect

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aspect towards the lives and safeties, the liberties and properties of all, who are not of that religion. It is to be hoped that many of the professors of it, especially at this time of day, are endued with a spirit of more equity and moderation; and such of them, as do not approve of the intolerant maxims of their Hierarchy, are fairly intitled to all the rights and privileges of good citizens, in every community to which they belong, and to all the indulgence, in the exercise of their religious worship, which they may be persuaded will render them acceptable to God, even in protestant states.

There are two things which may, for the present, incline them to more moderation, in their professions at least; one of which is the want of power to give their principles their full operation; the other is an apparent

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rent inclination of the Sovereigns in Roman catholic countries, particularly of the Emperor of Germany, to discourage a number of superstitions, and to lay open a more friendly ~~and~~ and liberal intercourse with the Protestants, which was heretofore blocked up, by many maxims and exclusive prohibitions of their ancestors. Whether the Roman catholics of England have brought themselves to relish these conciliatory measures must be left to time to determine.

In the mean time, it is to be supposed, that their principles, merely religious, as well as their practices founded upon them, continue still to be the same; and though they may have no ill effect at present, with regard to public welfare, must still have a tendency to make evil and uncharitable impressions upon the individuals

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duals of that communion, and upon such persons as come over to them, with respect to their ideas of the genuine principles of christianity.—Our Saviour says of the Pharisees of his time, “in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” And though this should be a warning to all who preside in the christian churches, of all denominations, to be careful how they depart from the simplicity of the doctrines and precepts of the gospel, adding to them ordinances and injunctions, unwarranted by any scriptural precedent; (in which practice, perhaps, some christian societies, who call themselves Protestants, may not be altogether blameless, and may be in some degree liable to the censure of our blessed Saviour) yet the presumption of the church of Rome, in their traditional tenets and injunctions, is out of all
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comparison more offensive and disgraceful to the christian religion, than that of any other christian society whatever.—For which reason, it can never be unseasonable to warn those, who desire to prosecute their everlasting interest upon the surest foundation, not to be deluded, by mere external shew of authority, to desert the plain rules of the gospel, by substituting for them, or superadding to them, ostentatious services, which are not required at their hand, but by those who have profanely usurped the powers and prerogatives peculiar to God alone. It is the business of the ensuing tract to undeceive every one who has been misled to take the commandments of men for the doctrines and injunctions of divine Revelation.

It is to be hoped, that it will be understood that this advice is offered
to

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to the Roman catholics of England, with the same spirit of charity and good-will which were the author's motives for first making it public: nothing more remains for the editor, than to wish and pray it may have a good effect upon those for whose use it is chiefly designed.

FRIENDLY

FRIENDLY and SEASONABLE

A D V I C E, &c.

I N T R O D U C T I O N.

My Friends and Countrymen,

IT is observed by others, and complained of by yourselves, that you lie under many inconveniences, by reason of your stiff adherence to those opinions which Rome calls *Religion*: the charges you are at to maintain a foreign jurisdiction, and your want of the communion of those Christians among whom you live, the un-

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easy

easy rites imposed on you here, and the great hazard of your salvation hereafter, are reckoned by others to be evils appendant to your professing the *Faith* of that Church. But if you yourselves do not feel or not fear these things, and so account them no grievance, yet you are sensible of other pressures, and frequently complain, that your estates are obnoxious to the penalties of the law, and your persons exposed to the general hatred of the people. You tell us, you want many privileges of other subjects, and lie under many burthens from which others are free: You perceive, that your actions are observed, your designs suspected, and your party accused to be the cause of all public evils. How far some of your own persuasion have contributed hereunto I shall not take upon me to judge; esteeming it a more charitable employment to offer some expedient to free you from those sad effects, which you complain of, than either to enquire after the cause of the nation's general antipathy to your religion, or dispute about the occasion thereof:

thereof: wherefore, whilst some accuse your Practices, and others deride your Worship, I have so much affection for your Persons, as my countrymen, and so much charity for your Souls, since you bear the name of Christian, as to present you with some useful Advice. It is true, the common apprehension concerning you might almost discourage such an attempt, it being generally believed, that a Roman Catholic's prejudice is like theirs in St. Augustine, "who, being descended of misbelieving
"ancestors, preferred their extraction before the truth;" and like the resolution of Cotta in Cicero, who says, "That no
"discourse of either learned or unlearned
"men, should ever remove him from the
"opinion received from his fore-fathers,
"concerning the worship of the immortal
"Gods *." But I know how many of you are masters of more reason than to ground your faith upon so uncertain a foundation: "It is not the part of wise
"men," saith a learned Father, "to be en-

* Cicer. de Natur. Deor. lib. 2.

“flaved to a received opinion, nor rashly
 “to give up themselves to their fathers
 “customs; but to endeavour to find out
 “the truth;*” and it is the advice of the
 great Apostle, “to prove all things,
 “and hold fast that which is good,”
 1 *Theff.* v. 21. because it is a “zeal with-
 “out knowledge,” and foolish obstinacy
 to be confident of that which we never
 did examine. I can easily believe your
 spiritual guides will esteem no sin more
 mortal, than to inquire into those prin-
 ciples which you receive from them, and
 they will scarce allow you the liberty to
 peruse a few lines presented by so chari-
 table a hand: But their prohibitions, me-
 thinks, should make you more suspicious
 and inquisitive, and cause you to resolve
 to try that coin which shuns the touch-
 stone, knowing that “truth seeks no cor-
 “ners, and that which is real fears no
 “test.” The Church of England puts no
 such restraints upon her adherents, nor is
 she unwilling to have her doctrines tried

* Theodoret. de Curand. Græc. affect. Serm. 1.

by Scripture and the best antiquity; because she finds those are her best sons that have inquired most narrowly. "Evil needs
"a mask and disguise," said the brave Agamemnon, "but light makes true goodness
"to be more illustrious and more lovely;" and a greater than he saith, "Every one
"that doth evil hateth the light, neither
"cometh to the light, lest his deeds should
"be reprov'd; but he that doth truth
"cometh to the light," *John* iii. 20, 21. If therefore you have but so much consideration as to suspect, and so much courage as to examine, I should not be without hope, that my Advice might take place, since, as Plato notes, "Every soul is unwillingly deprived of truth, which men
"cannot resist when once it appears unto
"them." I shall ask no more of you than to search impartially, whether the doctrines wherein you differ from the Church of England, deserve so firm an assent as you give them; and he that dares not do this, is not a disciple, but a slave. It may be those Counsellors may please the heady Bigots of your persuasion better, who advise

them to ease their mind by reproaching the laws and the government, or to attempt the shaking off their grievances by more desperate courses; but I do not believe the wiser and more sober *Romanists* can approve such cursed motions: there are many of them too noble to admit such thoughts. It is the Stoic's character in Galen, "That they would rather betray their country than renounce their maxims;" but I take those of your party to be generally of a better temper, and therefore I hope you will account it to be far more friendly and seasonable Advice, to try these your principles strictly, before you expose your country or yourselves to suffer all the ill consequences of your rigid maintaining of them; and if you once rightly understand them, I hope you will discern they do not deserve to be retained at so dear a rate: so that it is possible you may resolve to quit your mistaken opinions and your real sufferings together. However, though your inquiry shall not have this effect, yet this trial of your principles ought not to be wholly declined; for I would advise you
to

to examine the Roman Doctrines, if it were but only to declare, that your religion is not a blind and accidental choice; and to vindicate yourselves from the charge of the old Samaritans, "who worshipped they knew not what."

SECTION

SECTION I.

Whether the Roman opinions, which differ from the Church of England, be the Old Religion?

I Doubt not, but those who have been educated in the Romish Religion, as well as those who have inconsiderately turned to it, do please themselves in fancying they are of the *Old Religion*, and hence they assume and appropriate to themselves the name of *Catholics*, upon this presumption, that they do entirely, and in all things, agree with the Ancient and Universal Church. But, my friends, if you have the patience to inquire, you will find there is no good ground for this persuasion; it being evident the Roman is not the Old Religion, in any other articles, but only in those which are found in the *Apostles Creed*, or founded upon the plain words of *Holy Scripture*: for that is the
Old

Old Religion, which God revealed at first, and which Christ and his Apostles taught. "That is truest which was the first," saith Tertullian, "and that was first, which was "from the beginning *." So St. Cyprian; "We ought not to regard so much, what "some others before us have thought fit, "as what Christ himself, who was before "all, hath done †." Now, if that be the Old Religion which is taught in the Holy Scripture and the Creed, herein the religion of Rome cannot pretend to be older than the religion of this Church, because we hold all these Articles as well as they; yea, if the case be rightly stated, the Church of England's faith is the Old Religion, and not that of Rome; for She professeth, "To believe nothing as an Article "of Faith, but what is read in Holy "Scripture, or may be proved thereby ‡;" but the Roman Church declares, "They "receive traditions with the same veneration that they do the Scriptures §." So

* Tertullian. in Martion. lib. 4.—† Cyprian. ad Cæcilian. Ep. 63.—‡ Articles of the Church of England, Art. 6.—§ Concil. Trident. Sess. 4.

that

that we hold all the principles of the Old Religion, and no other; but they, under the pretence of Traditions, have invented and added many points to the Old Religion which are not mentioned in the Bible, and decreed other Articles contrary to the Old Religion recorded in Scripture, and all these are a *New Religion*; and yet these are the doctrines in which we differ. In all the principles which are truly the Old Religion we and they generally do agree; but if you take the religion of the Roman Church for the doctrines in which they differ from us, it may be justly said, they are of the New Religion, and we of the Old, since our religion was recorded in Scripture seventeen hundred years ago, as our Adversaries seem to confess, when they call us "*Scriptuarii*, Scripture-men:" *Prateol.* whereas all that which is properly their religion, is of much later date. And that I may not be thought to invent this charge, or to accuse the Roman Church wrongfully, I will instance in the most principal of the doctrines wherein we differ, and
bring

bring in your own Doctors as witnesses of this truth.

1. That *Prayers to the Saints*, are not mentioned by Christ nor his Apostles, is confessed by Salmeron, Lindan, and Bannes *. Etherianus saith as much of “prayers for the dead †.” *Indulgences* are not to be found in Scripture, nor in the ancient Doctors, say Durandus, Major, Cajetan, and Antoninus ‡. *Transubstantiation* itself cannot be proved by Scripture, if you will take three Cardinals words for it §. And if our designed brevity would allow it, the like might be proved of all the rest.

* Salmeron in 1 Tim. cap. 2.—Lindan Panop. l. 3. c. 5.—Bannes 2. 2æ. qu. 1. Art. 10. conclus. 2.

† Hugo Etherian. de regressu animæ.

‡ Durand. 4. Sent. dist. 20. qu. 3.—Major 4. d. 2. qu. 2.—Cajetan. Opusc. 15. cap. 1.—Anton. part 1. sum. tit. 10. cap. 3.

§ Fisher de Captiv. Babyl. c. 10.—De Alliaco in 4. Sent. qu. 6. art. 1.—Cajetan. ap. Suarez. tom. 3. disp. 46.

But

But we must proceed to shew, there are some *New* things in the Romish Religion, directly contrary to the Scripture. The taking the *Cup from the Laity* is contrary to our Saviour's institution, as that very Council of Constance confesseth which first enjoined it; for they say, the Sacrament shall be given in one kind only to the people, "*Non obstante, &c.* notwithstanding "our Lord did appoint it in both *;" and your own authentic vulgar translation, as if this innovation had been foreseen, where the Greek only hath, "We are all partakers "of one bread, adds (*& de uno calice*) and "of one cup:" 1 Cor. x. 17. The Veneration which you give to *Images*, seems to all impartial eyes directly contrary to the second Commandment; and though your Priests will not directly confess it, yet their general leaving out the *second Commandment* in your Catechisms, and cutting the *tenth* in two, to keep up the number, and conceal the omission from the vulgar, is a fair evidence, they themselves suspected that this Commandment made against them,

* Concil. Constant. Sess. 13.

and

and feared others would apprehend it so. To these you may add, *Praying in an unknown tongue*, which St. Paul condemns in one whole chapter, 1 *Corinth.* xiv. as some of your own commentators on the place confess; as also the making *Saints* and *Angels* your *Mediators with God*, when the same Apostle positively saith, “there is “but one Mediator, *viz.* Christ Jesus:” 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. All these therefore cannot rightly be accounted any part of the Old Religion, properly so called. But if we shall descend lower, these, and many other points of your Religion are so far from being the Old Religion, that the writers of the Roman Church do acknowledge, they were not known to the primitive Fathers; yea, they record the very time when most of them were imposed. The doctrine of *Purgatory* was first built upon the credit of those fabulous dialogues attributed to Gregory the first; or, if they were his, which many doubt, this was six hundred years after Christ, and it was not generally believed in the Church five hundred years after, as we learn from

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an old historian *. And as for the *Prayers* made *to deliver Souls* from thence (that gainful article of your Church) we are told by your own authors, that the first who caused them to be appointed by your Church, was Odilo Abbot of Clugny, *an.* 1000 †. The worshipping of God by *Images*, was not allowed by the ancient Fathers, say your own authors, Clemangis, Polydore Virgil, and Peresius Aiala ‡. And all men know this kind of use of Images can be derived no higher, as to its being decreed, than that despicable Council § in the eighth century; but both the doctrine and the Council also was rejected for many years after by the French, English, and German Churches ||. *Indulgences* are not ancient, as Bishop Fisher confesses **;

* Otto Frising. Chron. an. 1146.

† Ranul. Higden Polychron. l. 6. c. 15.—Petrus Damian. Vit. Odilon.

‡ Clemangis de nov. Celebr. II.—Polydor. Virgil. de Invent. rer. l. 6. c. 13.—Aiala de Tradit. p. 2. c. de Imag.

§ Concil. secundum Nicæn. an. 787.

|| Hoveden Annal. par. 1. page 405.—Matth. Westmon. an. 793.

** Fish. in 18. Artic. Luther.

nor is there any good proof in your own authors for them before the time of Pope Alexander III. *an.* 1160, or the Council of Clermont however, *an.* 1096*; and the first who made money of them was Boniface IX. *an.* 1390, as Platina and Polydore Virgil tell us †; and the first Jubilee, the great market for them, was not an hundred years before ‡. The forcing all *Priests* to vow *single life*, and renounce their wives, was first obtruded upon the Church by Pope Hildebrand §; “without any precedent,” saith an old historian, “and, as many thought, of an “indiscreet zeal, contrary to the holy “Fathers opinion ||.” And yet he was not obeyed here in England in this for above a hundred years after: for our ancient records say, “All these decrees “availed nothing, for the priests by the

* Scloppius de Indulg. cap. 12.

† Platin. in Vit. Polyd. Virgil de Invent l. 8. cap. 8.

‡ Temp. Boniface 8. *an.* 1300.—Polyd. Virg. ut supra, l. 8. cap. 1.

§ An. 1074. Matth. Westmon. eod. *an.*—Vincent. Spec. Hist. l. 24. c. 45.—Antonin. lib. 16. c. 1. sect. 21.

|| Sigebert. Chron. ad *an.* 1074.

“ King’s consent still had their wives, as
 “ formerly *.” *Auricular confession* to a
 Priest was never imposed as necessary until
 the Lateran Council †: It being little above
 fifty years before, that we are informed by
 the famous Master of the Sentences, and by
 Gratian your great compiler of the decrees,
 that it was in our choice whether we would
 confess to God only, or to the Priest also ‡;
 and T. Aquinas confesseth this was the
 opinion then §. *Transubstantiation*, the
 discriminating doctrine of your present
 Church, was not held by the Fathers, as
 your own Doctors acknowledge ||, and
 one of the infallible heads of your Church
 affirms, “ That the Elements cease not to
 “ be of the substance and nature of Bread
 “ and Wine **.” The Schoolmen confess

* Histor. Petroburgh. an. 1127. ap. Spelm. T. 2. p. 36.

† Concil. Later. Can 21. an. 1215.

‡ Peter Lomb. l. 4. sentent. dist. 77.—Gratian de
 Pœnit. dist. 1. c. 89. circ. an. 1150.

§ Tho. Aqu. in 4. Sent. dist. 17.

|| Gelasius Pap. de duabus Naturis contra Eutych.

** Gregor. de Valent. de Transub. lib. 2. cap. 7.—
 Cardin. Cusan. Exercit. l. 6.

Transubstantiation is not ancient*; and two of the most famous of them plainly deny it†. The *administering* the Sacrament in *one kind*, is no older than the Council of Constance (as was noted before)‡; the practice of the whole Church and of Rome itself being otherwise till then§: Finally, many things were never decreed and imposed as necessary to be believed till the late Council of Trent; such as the equaling *Apocryphal* books and traditions to the undoubted canon of Scripture, *Justification* by the merit of good works, &c. Which Council of Trent was never fully owned by the Catholics of France||; nor was it ever received as a lawful Council by this English nation.

It would be too tedious to run over all the rest of those points wherein the Roman differs from the English Church, or else it might be shewed, that the *Appeals to Rome*,

* Ap. Suarez. tom. 1. in Euch. disp. 7.

† Scotus in 4. Sent. cap. II. qu. 3.—Durand. in 4. Sent. dist. 10. qu. 1. n. 13.

‡ An. 1415.

§ T. Aquin. in Johan. 6.—Alphonf. a Cast. adv. hæref. l. 6.

|| Bohell. de Decr. Eccles. Gallic. l. 5. tit 20.

and the *Pope's universal Claim, Veneration of Relicks, Invocation of the Blessed Virgin, Pilgrimages, &c.* were wholly unknown to the three first centuries, as the ingenuous Romanists will confess, and our writers have largely proved. By all which it appears, that the old Religion of Rome, for the first three hundred years, had no formal *Invocation of Saints* nor *Angels*; no *Purgatory*, nor *Prayers* to be delivered thence; no *Images*, no *Transubstantiation*, no *half Communion*, no *Jubilees*, no *Indulgences*, no constrained *Celibacy*, no *Prayers* in an *unknown Tongue*, no customary *auricular Confession*, no *Apocrypha* in her canon of Scripture, nor the rest. Now if you strip your Church of these doctrines, she retains scarce any thing, but the protestant articles of the Church of England; But if you take Rome with these additions, her Religion is not so old by far as the Religion of this Church. Perhaps it will be pretended, “ though these decrees were
“ made in later ages, yet the determina-
“ tions were made by virtue of aposto-
“ lical Traditions preserved in the Roman
“ Church

“ Church from the very beginning ;” and upon this pretence your late writers of controversy have generally laid aside all arguments from Scripture and ancient Fathers, and resolve all into oral Tradition and the Infallibility of the Roman Church. But what is this but to confess, that the Scriptures, the ancient Fathers, and all written records, which are impartial witnesses, do make against them? only these unknown traditions, which are only in their own keeping, and may be of their own devising, these, they say, bear witness for them, which is to make themselves Judges in their own cause; and may justly occasion your enquiry, whether the former Popes knew of these traditions or no: If not, how then came the later Popes to the knowledge of them? If they knew of them of old, why did they let them sleep so long, and suffer the Church to err for so many years for want of them? Did they discharge their universal Headship well in this concealment? But in very truth it is evident, the first Popes knew of no such traditions, and the later Popes have invented

vented them to support their new designs; which appears by the ancient Popes declaring directly contrary to these pretended apostolical traditions, of which take a few Examples: Pope Gaius writes, "That the righteousness of the Saints
 "avails nothing to our pardon or justification *;" Pope Gelasius denies Transubstantiation, as was noted just now †; the famous Gregory the great saith, "He himself was the Emperor's servant,
 "and owed him obedience ‡;" and declares, "that God had given the Emperor power over priests as well as
 "others" §. The same Pope disowns the title of *universal Bishop*, as unfit for him or any other ||. He also determines, "that it is lawful for such of the Clergy
 "as cannot contain, to marry **;" and he allows Images for history and memory

* Gaii. Epist. Decret. ad Felicem; ap. Binium. tom. 1. page 173.

† Gelas. de duabus Nat. contr. Eutych.

‡ Greg. Mag. Epist. ad Mauriti. lib. 2. Ep. 61.

§ Idem ad Theod. lib. 2. Ep. 64.

|| Idem ad Eulog. lib. 7. Epist. 30.

** Respons. ad Interrog. secundam Aug. Cantuariens.

only

only *. A later than he also in the canon Law decrees, that in such Dioceses, where there be people of divers languages, “The Bishop shall provide fit men to “celebrate divine offices, and minister the “Sacraments of the Church according to “the diversity of rites and variety of “their languages †.” The aforesaid Pope Gregory the first affirms, that the book of Maccabees is not canonical ‡; and as well the ordinary gloss, as the old editions of the Bible which were allowed by the Roman Bishops, and used in that Church before the Council of Trent, do all distinguish between the canonical books, and those which the protestant Church now call Apocrypha §. Yet the contrary to all these hath been afterwards decreed upon pretence of being apostolical

* Ad Seren. lib. 7. Epist. 109.

† Decretal. Greg. l. 1. tit. 31. cap. 14.

‡ Gregory Mag. Expos. Job, l. 19. cap. 17.

§ Gloss. Ordin. an. 1200, in Præfat. de libris Canon, et non Canon.—Biblia Complutens. in Præf. a Card. Ximeno approb. a Leone x. an. 1502.—Biblia Vulg. edit. Basil. cum Gloss. Ord. an. 1506.—Biblia S. Pagnini & Birkmanni, & Vatabli per Rob. Stephan, an. 1541.

traditions; by which account you may see, if your prejudices hinder not, that the present Roman Church, as it differs from the Church of England, retains neither the old Religion of the Scriptures, nor that of the primitive Church in general, nay, nor that of the ancient Church of Rome; for they have omitted some points, added others, and altered so many, that though Rome keep the old Name, it doth not keep the old Faith. “We may “now seek Rome in the midst of Rome,” as Juvenius Vitalis said; “nor can it be “denied,” saith another, “but the Roman “Church is not a little different from its “ancient beauty and splendor” *. There is not the faith, the manners, nor the worship of the primitive Roman Church; and therefore, according to St. Ambrose, “they that have not Peter’s Faith cannot “succeed to Peter’s Inheritance” †; and as St. Hierome observes, “they are not the “Sons of the Saints who possess their “places, but they which follow their

* Cassander de Officio boni Viri.

† Ambros. de Pœnitent. lib. 1. cap. 6.

“works;

“works;” and “that only,” saith Lactantius, “is the Catholic Church which “retains the true worship of God*.” You might have seen and heard in Rome of old, a Bishop without a triple Crown or the title of universal, Churches without images, Priests under no vows of single life, Litanies without any names of saints or *ora pro nobis*, the Mass celebrated in a known tongue, Bibles calling divers books Apocrypha, which are now reckoned canonical scripture; People not enslaved by auricular confession, not debarred of the cup, not frightened with purgatory, nor impoverished with purchasing prayers and indulgences to save them from thence, &c.

To conclude therefore, why may you not justly desert them, who have in so many things departed from the Old Religion, taught by Christ and his Apostles, believed by the ancient Fathers, and received by the first and best Bishops of that same Church? If you desire to be really of

* Lactant. Instit. lib. 4. cap. ult.

the Old Religion; nay, if you would hold the faith of the primitive Roman Church, you may come much nearer to it, by embracing the Religion of your own country, than by retaining the opinions of the modern Church of Rome, which are most of them meer innovations; and though you have revered them while you supposed them ancient and apostolical, yet we hope you will now renounce them when they are evidently discovered to be Gibeonites disguised on purpose to deceive, and that, notwithstanding their mouldy pretences, as if they had come from far and were descended from ancient times, their true original is much later and nearer to this present age.

And now, secondly, it will be easy to determine, that as the Roman is not the Old Religion, so neither ought the Professors of it to appropriate to themselves the name of Catholic. For whether we take it in the primary and grammatical sense for universal, or in its common acceptance for true believers, the Romanist hath

hath no peculiar right to this venerable title: First, because their faith in those points wherein it differs from the Church of England is not universal; for the Christians holding the faith of Rome, are not above a fourth part of those that believe in Christ; which account we thus make out: First, Bellonius, a Romanist, and one whose book was licenced at Antwerp, asserts "that the rites of the Greek Church spread wider than those of the Latine *;" and the judicious Mr. Breerwood proves, the Greeks do far exceed †. The worthy Sir Edwin Sands affirms that "the Greek Church in number exceeds any other—" and the Protestants in number and circuit of territory are very near equal to "the papal part ‡;" to which may be added all those Christians in Asia and Africa, which are neither of the Roman nor of the Greek Church, and which are reckoned up by the afore said Mr. Breer-

* Bellonii obser. lib. 1. cap. 35.

† Enquiries, chap. 18. pag. 139.

‡ Europæ Speculum (mihi) pag. 268, 269.

wood, * making up a number as great as any of the former: so that reckoning the Greek Church for one part, the Protestants for another part, and those Asian and African Christians for another part, and then the Romanists are but only one fourth part of such as believe in Christ; and it is very odd to say, that the fourth part is the whole: And surely, my friends, you cannot seriously think the Roman Church to be the universal or catholic Church in this sense, when you remember that the Pope's authority is not acknowledged by the generality of those Christians living in England, Scotland, and Ireland, with the Plantations thereunto belonging; nor by those of Denmark and Sweden; nor by those of Transylvania, Walachia and Moldavia; nor by the large Church of Russia; nor by the populous States and Provinces of the Dutch, with their many Plantations abroad; nor by at least five parts of six of the vast country of upper Germany; nor by two parts of three of the

* Enquiries, chap. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, and 25, from pag. 139, to pag. 183.

Switzers; nor by those of Geneva and Piedmont; nor by very many in France, Hungary, Poland, &c. How many millions of Christians are there in the Eastern World who have no dependence on the Roman Church? The Christians of the Greek Church, properly so called, under the three Patriarchs of Constantinople, Alexandria and Antioch, those of Armenia, who are professed enemies of Rome, and yearly excommunicate the Pope; the Georgian Christians, with many other lesser names in Asia, the Abassine Christians in Africa; all these are not of the communion of the Roman Church, and therefore, how can that Church pretend to the title of universal, or catholic in this sense? But secondly, if you say you are Catholics, that is, true Believers in all points; I desire you to consider, that none say so but yourselves, and it is suspicious "their witness is not true, who bear witness to themselves," *St. John v. 31.* and where so many articles of Faith are new, it is probable some are false; since the oldest things in Religion are the truest

and the best: So that upon the whole inquiry, the Church of England may more justly claim the title of catholic, because the principles thereof are few and clearly deduced from Scripture, believed in the primitive Church, and universally received by all sorts of Christians, who differ in some ceremonies; but for the points, which this Church accounts necessary to salvation, the whole christian world generally agrees in them. And since the religion of the Church of England is the most ancient and most universal, you will be more truly of the Old Religion, and more properly stiled Catholics by embracing the faith professed in your own country, and disowning those who damn all Christians but them of their own party, although it be evident there are in the world, Christians far more in number than they, and among those many equal in learning and superior in piety to the best of the Roman Church, who for all this are reprobated and sentenced to eternal flames by their uncharitable Anathemas.

SECTION

S E C T I O N II.

*Whether the said opinions were not introduced
for evil ends?*

ALthough all this be matter of fact, and acknowledged by your own writers, yet I must expect, the venerable esteem you have so long had for the Roman Church, will make you slow to believe this deserved charge of innovation; and perhaps you will wonder how so pure, so celebrated, and so orthodox a Church, as Rome primitive was, should vary so much from her first faith: yet since the change is so evident, and so well attested, I hope at least your curiosity will tempt you to inquire, first, for what ends she should bring in these new doctrines; secondly, by what means they became so generally believed; thirdly, of what nature the things themselves are; fourthly, whether there be authority sufficient in

the Roman Church to impose them on the whole christian world; fifthly, whether the Catholics of England ought to be swayed by that authority to embrace them: And if in examining these particulars any thing shall be spoken which sounds harshly to your ears, accustomed to hear nothing but encomiums of Rome, I shall desire you to consider, that truth is seldom grateful to offenders; and I must say with one of the writers of the Popes' lives, "We relate these things because they were done, and if the Popes would not have base or evil things reported of them, they must do no such things, or if they do them, not fancy they can be so concealed, as that they shall not be known nor related to posterity*." For my own part, I profess, I take no delight in accusation; nor shall I say any thing out of malice to that church, but out of pity to the souls of those who without reason dote upon it: First, therefore, if you enquire, what ends the Ro-

* Papyrius Masson. de Vit. Pont.

man Church could have to bring in these new doctrines, I reply, the first decay of that Church began in her manners: "For after there were christian magistrates," saith St. Hierome, "the Church became fuller of riches and emptier of virtue*." And for the Roman Bishops, they began very early "to affect a dominion beyond the bounds of priesthood," as Socrates notes †; which made St. Basil say, fourteen hundred years ago, "I hate the pride of that Church ‡," and caused a heathen historian of that age to say, "the Roman Bishops were richly clad, carried in litters, and profuse in their feastings §." But the faults of that age were small in respect of aftertimes, for as their wealth and power increased, their manners grew still worse and worse, as we find by the complaints of Salvian and many others, till at length about the year 900, your own Baronius saith, "The face of the Roman

* Hieronym. Vita Malach.

† Socrat. hist. lib. 7. c. 11.

‡ Basil. Epist. 10. & Baronius, tom. 4. an. 327. Sect. 32.

§ Ammian. Marcellin. hist. lib. 27.

Church

“ Church was become most filthy, when
 “ lewd and potent Courtezans swayed all
 “ there, at whose pleasure Sees were
 “ changed, Bishops placed, and, which is
 “ horrid to pious ears, their Paramours were
 “ thrust into St. Peter’s Chair, false Popes
 “ which only serve to fill up so great a
 “ space of time in the catalogue of Roman
 “ Bishops* ;” and a writer who lived in
 those times tells us, “ the world was
 “ amazed at the manners of the Ro-
 “ mans†;” “ it is strange,” saith another
 historian, “ how far in that age they were
 “ degenerated from the piety of the old
 “ Popes‡;” “ this age,” as another speaks,
 “ was especially unhappy in this, that for
 “ about an hundred and fifty years, there
 “ were fifty Popes wholly fallen from the
 “ virtue of their predecessors, being dis-
 “ orderly and apostatical rather than apo-
 “ stolical§;” and, if our brevity would
 permit it, we could shew out of Platina,

* Baron. Annal. tom. 10. an. 912. sect. 8.

† Gerbert. Epist. 40. ad Stephanum Rom. Eccl. Diacon.

‡ Sabellicus, Ennead. 9. l. 2.

§ Genebard. Chronolog. lib. 4. 10. Secul. init.

Onuphrius, and others of your own writers, that there was no reformation in all the ages, while these new doctrines were in coining. Now it is the great Philosopher's observation, "That wickedness is destructive of good principles *," so that it is no wonder, if in such decays of piety, and such a flood of iniquity, the Roman Church did bring in many new articles suitable to her manners; and I think when pride, luxury, and covetousness possess the Chair, we can hardly expect any other laws, but such as shall gratify these affections: And the practices as well as the decrees of Rome, for divers of the later centuries have so apparently tended this way, that it hath been taken notice of by all those of her own communion, whose affection hath not robbed them of their discerning powers; yea, even in catholic countries it hath abated much of the reverence formerly paid to that See, by reason the designs thereof are so apparently secular, tending not to the salva-

* Aristot. Ethic. lib. 6.

tion of souls, but the support of their own grandeur: Which makes me admire our English Romanists should hug their chains, and adore those who abuse their well-meaning devotion with articles of faith, serving rather to carry on the designs of the imposers, than the salvation of their over-credulous believers. Methinks an easy apprehension might discover, that the Roman guides govern you by principles that have more of Machiavel in them, than of Conscience or Gospel-simplicity, and a little consideration will inform you, that those things which they teach you to call Religion, are arts to enslave and impoverish you, and engines to advance themselves to the highest pitch of honour and abundance. St. Bernard, though a great friend to the Roman Church, saw this, when he said, "At Rome all regard is given to honour, but to holiness none at all*." Were this the fault of particular mens' evil management, from which no society is free,

* Bernard. de Confid. l. 4. c. 2.

it were more excusable, but there are doctrines added to the old catholic faith, (even most of the tenets wherein they differ from the Church of England) which are plain artifices to increase the power and wealth of Rome: Doctrines for which they dispute with us upon Demetrius's principle, "because thereby they have their gain," *Act. xix. 25*; and many think the guides of your Church contend for some of these principles, not because they believe them, but because it is their interest the people should be persuaded of them, which makes them secretly laugh at their credulity who will be imposed on by them, as that great Cardinal did, when he gave the people who flocked about him his benediction in these words, *Qui vult decipi decipiatur*: And it is a vile suspicion of this which we may gather from that observation of Hospinian, "That in Italy the name *Christian* is used for an Idiot or Fool*." But to be more particular, let us look over some instances

* Hosp. de orig. Monach. l. 6. c. 66.

of such new doctrines as are taught in the Roman Church for secular ends.

We begin with the doctrine of implicit Faith, or believing as the Church believes, a doctrine unknown in St. Cyril's time, who speaking to his young Christians, bids them "not merely believe the things he spoke, because he affirmed them, unless he did demonstrate them to be so out of the divine Scripture*." And truly this novel doctrine may agree with Pythagoras's *ipse dixit*, and is a good shelter for Paganism, the best argument for which, Balbus saith, is this, "that he had received it from his fore-fathers †." The Jewish Rabbins told their disciples, "They must believe whatever they taught them, though they should say that their right hand was their left:" and it was becoming enough in Apelles the Heretic to charge his seduced scholars, "not to examine his principles by reason ‡:" But it is below the honour of true religion to desire

* Cyril. Catechef. 4. p. 84.

† Cicero de Natur. Deorum. l. 3.

‡ Euseb. hist. lib. 5. c. 13.

to be taken upon trust; so that this doctrine is a policy of your priests to secure their evil principles from being enquired into, and a device to make you depend on them as infallible oracles, who can by this means lead you blind-fold whither they will, and impose any thing on you which serves their interest, under the pretence of true Religion. Secondly, auricular Confession to a priest was voluntary of old, and only used in case of a troubled conscience, or a strong temptation: But it is now made necessary at stated times, in all probability to make the priest master of every man's secrets, to discover the least inclination of their Profelytes to leave them, to keep the laity in awe, and make them venerate and depend upon their spiritual guide, who hereby hath them at his mercy, and their doctors do affirm, "that in some cases it is lawful to discover what is revealed to them in confession, especially if it concern the Roman Church *:" And thus they have

* Al. Hal. Par. 4. q. 28. mem. 2. art. 2.—Panorm. c. Omnis, de pæn. & rem. n. 24.—D. Soto de. rat. deteg. Secr. mem. 3. q. 4.

an intelligencer in the breast of every great man of their communion. The exempting the regular clergy from their lawful Bishops' jurisdiction, which St. Barnard complains of as an unjust thing*, and the freeing ecclesiastics from their natural Princes' authority is, that the Pope may have subjects numerous and potent to give intelligence and abet his interest in the bowels of all kingdoms. The Pope's Supremacy, Appeals to Rome, the Collation of Benefices, and other Preferments, the creating their Maker in the Mass, with many others, do all aim at the honour of the church of Rome, and the making its most inferiour priests revered. But because the honour of the church of Rome cannot be maintained without vast riches, it is obvious to all, that many of their new doctrines and practices have been introduced with design to fill the church's treasuries; or, if ignorance and superstition were the mother of these gainful devices, it is certain covetousness hath been an officious nurse unto them; as in the

* Barnard. de Confid. lib. 3. c. 4.

case of Purgatory, and prayers to deliver souls from thence, a novel fancy, feared and suspected at first by some, but countenanced and decreed by that church, thereby to oblige the people to give liberally for themselves or their deceased friends, to those who sell their prayers so commonly that they occasioned that Proverb, *no penny, no Pater noster*. It is impossible to reckon the vast sums that this opinion brings in, for so many *Masses*, *Diriges*, *Requiems*, for those *Trentals*, *Obits*, and *Anniversaries*, which the deluded Romanists purchase, with oblations of houses and lands, plate, vestments, jewels, images, and ready money. And it is very remarkable, that the fear of losing this income was one main impediment to restrain the Pope from yielding to a Reformation. To these may be added the doctrines of images and invocation of saints, with the reports of miracles done at certain places, and the device of *Canonization* by the Pope, an honour that none of the saints for the first five or six centuries ever had; but certain it is, that people

ple being persuaded of miracles wrought on earth, and intercession made in heaven, by these saints, do undertake pilgrimages to these places, and make oblations there; or else send their offerings, if they cannot go: And this in so excessive degrees, that there have been, and are some shrines, which outvie the treasuries of the greatest Princes of Europe; we may instance in Thomas Becket's at Canterbury*, and the still famous Lady of Loretto†. The relicks also of all other saints, yea, such as are said to belong to Jesus himself, have been formerly carried about to collect money, yea, sold for great sums, and are accounted marketable ware, and very gainful commodities in the Roman Church. The year of Jubilee and distribution of indulgences are used as devices to get money, as your own writers complain‡. The Pope's pretences to a power of dispensing with vows and oaths, leagues and contracts, marriages in prohibited degrees,

* Antiq. Canterb. fol. 247.

† Lassel's Voyage to Italy.

‡ Polydor. Virgil. de Invent. l. 8. c. 1.

&c. fill his coffers with silver, and his court with suitors. The taking money for penances, and granting absolution upon it for notorious sins, is so known an infamy, that we have the very book in our hands, copied out of the original in the Apostolic Chamber, setting down the rates and sums to be paid for absolution from the most horrid wickednesses; and to convince us that money is the only thing sought by the Church in these absolutions, the said book tells us, that “these
 “acts of Grace cannot be granted to the
 “poor, who have nothing, and therefore
 “cannot be comforted*.” And though the priests and friars have these and many more ways to draw money from the people, yet the Pope uses them but as sponges, to suck in wealth from others, that he may squeeze it into his own coffers afterwards: For it is scarce within the reach of arithmetic what sums the Roman Church receives from the inferior clergy and Bishops for institutions, confirmations, investitures, palls, first-fruits, tenths, &c.

* Vide Taxam Cameræ apostol. Impress. Parisiis.

the very tenths and first-fruits formerly enjoyed by the Pope, amounting in this nation, as we now compute them, to above 20,000*l. per ann.* and in the time of the Roman jurisdiction here, the clergy paid him a fifth part of their livings, sometimes for two or three years beside; and for the English Bishops, their subjection to Rome cost them dear, Walter Grey Archbishop of York paying ten thousand pounds sterling for his Pall*; and it was complained in the 23d of Henry VIII. that the Papacy had received out of England in about forty years past, for investitures of Bishops only, three score thousand pounds†. And the doctrine of forcing all priests to renounce marriage, is maintained by the policy of the Roman court, that they may not only profit by them living, but be their heirs when they die, there being no other good reason to be given for this rigid imposition, for sure they will not say it is simply unlawful for priests to marry, since Pius the

* Matth. Paris. pag. 274.

† L. Herbert. hist. Hen. VIII. p. 230.

second affirmed, "they may be allowed
 "to marry *;" and their great canonist
 faith, "there is as great reason to allow
 "priests marriage now, as ever there was
 "to restrain it †." What then! do they
 forbid it that Priests may be more pure?
 that cannot be the reason, because St. Paul
 faith, "Marriage defiles not," *Heb. xiii. 4.*
 and fornication, which certainly doth de-
 file, is tolerated, if not allowed ‡, and
 called a venial sin §: however reputed by
 their casuists a lesser sin in the priest, than
 marriage ||. And how pure this doctrine
 makes your clergy, let experience and
 your own writers teach you: "There
 "are many" faith St. Bernard "who can-
 "not be hid for their multitude, nor do
 "they seek to be concealed through their
 "impudence, who being kept from nup-

* Pius II. in *Gestis Concil. Basil.* vide item *Platin.* in
ejus vita, p. 329.

† *Panormitan. de Clericis conjug. Can. cum olim.*

‡ *Decret. P. Alex. l. 3. tit. 2. c. 3.*

§ *Gloss. ad Gratian. dist. 82. c. 5.*

|| *Ibid. dist. 34. Can. 7.—Costerus enchirid. de Cælibat.*
cap. 17.

“ tial remedies, run into all filthinefs*.”
 “ There are few free” saith another “ in
 “ these days from the crime of fornica-
 “ tion †,” the Pope thinking it almost a
 miracle some ages since to hear a candidate
 for a Bishopric attested to be a pure vir-
 gin ‡. The true reason therefore of this
 doctrine, which occasions so much wick-
 edness, we may learn from the canon
 law, which allows not regular Bishops
 to dispose of their estates by will, nor
 others of the clergy to be too free of their
 alms in their sickness §, how earnestly so-
 ever they exhort the laity thereunto:
 And thus the Church becomes their heir:
 and “ these spoils of the clergy,” as they
 very significantly term them “ which fall
 “ to the Church at their deaths, amount
 “ to a good round sum,” as a judicious
 author observes ||. I cannot express one
 half of those arts which the Roman Church

* Bern. de Convers. ad Cleric. cap. 29.

† Gloss. ad Gratian. dist. 82. c. 5.

‡ Matth. Paris. hist. Ann. 1234.

§ Decretal. Gregor. lib. 3. de Testam. tit. 26. cap. 7, 9.

|| Europ. Specul. pag. 197.

hath to drain both clergy and laity: But certain it is, they do draw a mass of treasure annually from the countries under their yoke, insomuch that it was complained of to the council of Spain, that Pope Pius V. "had got fourteen millions "out of that kingdom in a short space *;" and in the time of Henry III. of England it was computed, that "the Pope's revenue out of this nation exceeded the "King's†;" and another time complaint was made by the English, that "there "went threescore thousand marks yearly "out of his land to Rome‡." I shall not mention the frauds and cruelties used in collecting this money, only one thing that Johan. Sarisburiensis, a great bigot of the Pope's, and a hot stickler in Becket's cause, assures us, "that the legates of "the apostolical seat, did tyrannize over "the provinces, as if the Devil" saith he "were gone out from the presence of the

* Europ. Specul. pag. 198.

† Antiquitat. Britain. p. 178.

‡ Matth. Paris. pag. 667. & Epist. Anglor. ad Innocent.

" Lord

“ Lord to scourge the Church *.” Yet to oppose these officers of the Pope, is reckoned at Rome the most mortal sin : No wonder then can it be, that Pope Sixtus V. in five years time got together five millions of crowns, as Ciracella informs us, four millions of which his successor Gregory XIV. wasted in pomp and riot in less than ten months time†. And indeed they spend these sacred treasures as badly as they get them ; the very Popes themselves of late designing only to swallow all the little neighbouring principalities, and to make themselves Temporal Princes, to raise their nephews and nieces, if not sons and daughters, and advance their families to the highest dignities and fortunes : So that there is little of holiness left in them but in an empty title, it being a little above an hundred years since one said, “ No man at this day looks for
“ holiness in the Popes ; they are ac-
“ counted excellent if they be tolerably
“ good, or less wicked than other men

* Sarisb. Polycraticon, lib. 5. c. 16.

† Europ. Spec. p. 263.

“are *.” And the rest of his clergy and people are fuitable; for, “it cannot be disguised” saith a late exact observer “that the whole country is strangely overflowed with wickedness, with filthiness of speech, with beastliness of actions; both governours and subjects, both priests and friars, each striving as it were with other in an impudence therein †.” But I will not pursue this most ungrateful subject, which I profess I do not relate out of any envy, or delight in telling such sad stories; but I am forced to say these unpleasing truths to rescue your souls from those who serve the ends of their ambition and covetousness out of your devotion; from those who persuade you to call that Religion which maintains them in the highest plenty and luxury; from those who decree, that good works merit salvation, not because they believe this doctrine, (for if they did, they would do more good works themselves) but because this persuasion among the people fills the

* Papyr. Masson. in Vit. Julii 31. an. 1550.

† Europ. Spec. p. 27.

Church's treasures, and hath made the old pious and poor priests and deacons of Rome, illustrious Cardinals, who in magnificence and pomp dare vie with the greatest estates of Christendom; and their great Master scorns to have Kings and Emperours thought his equals. Wherefore when you have duly weighed all this, and considered the pride and insatiable avarice of the Roman Church, and withal observed, how all the doctrines in which they differ from us, tend merely to advance these ends, you cannot think it unlikely, that such men with such designs should alter and add to their old faith, especially when you hear St. Paul say, "The love of money is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith," 1 *Tim.* vi. 10. It is nothing that is truly ancient or really good, that we persuade you to renounce; but novel policies and devices which minister to secular designs, and you ought to account him your friend who would rescue you from this abuse, and persuade you into that Church, whose principles
are

are primitive, plain, and honest, whose clergy are content with the revenues which the laws of the land allow them, having none of these unchristian artifices of extraordinary gains, nor no design to teach you any doctrines, but such as will make you good, and direct you in the way to Heaven.

SECTION III.

*Whether the said opinions were not established
by evil means?*

THE next enquiry is, by what means these new doctrines became so generally believed? And here first we may note, your Church hath good reason to use this proverb, *Ignorance is the mother of devotion*; because the wretched blindness of those ages wherein these opinions were propagated, did hugely contribute to their reception; for it is not to be

E

denied

denied, that from the time of the decay of the western empire, and the irruptions of the Goths and Vandals into Europe, there began to be a great decay of learning, and Barbarism crept in by degrees, which is evident by the different style and way of writing which the later Fathers use, in comparison of those who lived in the first four or five centuries; and at length this ignorance became so universal, “that the study of the liberal arts was “generally laid aside,” as an old historian complains*; yea, such gross folly then possessed the world, as one of that time confesses, “that Christians believed more absurd things, than ever Pagans gave credit to†”. And that age which bred many of these errors is commonly by your own writers called, “The obscure age‡, “being wholly without any persons eminent for wit or learning§, the very “inferiour priests being not able to trans-

* Sabellic. Enne. 9. lib. 1.

† Agobardus lib. de grandine, &c. vers. fin.

‡ Baron. Annal. tom. x. an. 900. sec. 1.

§ Genebrard. Chron. lib. 4.

“late

“late an epistle into Latin * ;” “which
“Egyptian darkness continued in all the
“western world till a few years before
“the Reformation,” as your own Espen-
cæus confesseth †. Now this gross stupidity
must needs make the world apt and easy
to be abused with the most absurd and
monstrous doctrines; for ignorance is the
mother of all errors, as an old Council
affirms ‡, and not of true devotion, as you
now pretend. This made way for the
politic guides of Rome to impose such
opinions on the Church as might best
serve their own ends; “these tares were
“sowed while men slept,” *Matth. xiii. 25.*
And there were many circumstances con-
curring in those unlucky ages which con-
tributed to the furthering the Roman de-
signs: the withdrawing of the Emperours
into the east, and first the decay of the
western empire; then the destruction of
the eastern, and the desolation of all the
famous oriental Churches by the spreading

* Præfatio R. Aluredi ad Pastoral Gregorii.

† Claud. Espen. Com. ad 2 Tim. 3.

‡ Concil. Toletan. 4. c. 24. A. 633.

inundation of Turks and Saracens; so that the Pope had neither Emperour nor Patriarch, for a long time, that could oppose him, the miseries of all Christendom giving him opportunity to make himself the sole governour of these parts of the world, and none were able to contend with him, though many complained of his usurpation, Johan. Sarisburiensis telling Adrian IV. who asked him what men thought of the Roman Church, "that they esteemed it a stepmother, not a mother—and the Pope of Rome himself was grievous to all, and almost intolerable*." I shall not now be so tedious to you as to relate how this Church by force, and by taking all advantages, did attempt to suppress all that did oppose her impositions and grandeur; what wars the Popes raised against the German Emperours; what occasions they took to enslave the Greek Church, when they petitioned for relief against the conquering, and cruel Turks; what persecutions they raised against the Albigenes, Bohemians, and

* Sarisbur. Polycraticon, lib. 6. cap. 24.

Wiclevists, and how they destroyed all that resisted their innovations with fire and sword; only desiring you to remark that the Roman Church was the first author of putting men to death for that which they call heresy: A practice wholly differing from the “rules of Christianity*,” and from the opinion and practice of the ancient Church†, “it being a new and unheard of way of preaching” saith your St. Gregory “to force men by stripes to believe‡;” yet by fire and fagot the modern Church of Rome affrights the world into the embracing these articles, or by inquisitions and racks, awes it into silence. Her greatness and riches, her interest and severity to opposers, have been one sort of means to obtrude the belief of her gainful articles upon men; and her policies and frauds have been another, for you cannot think it unlikely that they, who have so little piety as to turn Reli-

* 2 Tim. ii. 24, 25.

† Tertul. ad Scap. c. 2.—Concil. Toletan. 4. cap. 56.

‡ Gregorius M. Epist. ad Episc. Constantinop.

gion into policy, should have so little honesty as to equivocate for the defence of their politic Religion; and verily, the ignorance and credulity of those blind ages were such, that your Church never sought for solid arguments to confirm their new decrees, but built them usually upon fictions, and proved them by notorious forgeries, and accounted this way of proceeding not only lawful, but pious, so that whosoever reads those discourses of your Jesuits in defence of these deceits, called by them *pia fraudes*, will conclude the High-Priests of Rome-Christian as well as Rome-Heathen to have been of opinion, “that it was expedient the people should “be deceived in their Religion,” as Scevola the Pagan Pontifex M. in St. Augustine saith*; and no doubt your Church agrees with the heathen Varro in the same author †, where he saith, “there are many “truths in Religion which it is not expedient for the people to know, and though “divers things therein be false, yet the

* August. de Civit. Dei, l. 4. c. 27.

† Idem, ibid, c. 31.

“ people

“people ought to think them true.” The instances of some particulars will make this more evident; first, *Miracles* were the foundation, and most authentic proofs for Invocation of Saints, Veneration of Images and Relicks, Pilgrimages, Purgatory, Monastical Vows, and most of the gainful Articles of the Roman Church; and yet St. Chrysostome saith, that “there were no “footsteps of the power of miracles left in “the Church in his time *;” and your St. Gregory thinks them unnecessary amongst believers †, and so do many others ‡: yet in the dark ages nothing was more frequently pretended than miracles wrought by Saints living and dead, as appears by the stories of their lives, and the legends of your Church, which relations are so senseless and so ridiculous, so impossible and unlikely, so little agreeing with chronology, history, or geography, that the modern writers of the Roman

* Chrysost. de Sacerdotio. l. 4.

† Gregor. mag. hom. 4.

‡ Augustin. de ver. Relig. c. 24.—Ferus Comment. in lib, Judic.

party are ashamed of them. Hence your own Canus complains, that these authors of Saints' lives "with false and counterfeit fables have blemished the lives of "Saints*;" and the same writer saith there†, that the author of your so famed Golden Legend "was a man of an iron "forehead and a leaden soul:" Harding also affirmeth‡, "that there be many vain "fables in it." Simeon Metaphrastes is another of these miracle writers, and is so eminent, that he is read in the modern Roman Breviaries §, and yet Cardinal Bellarmine blames him for incredible stories, and relations not agreeing to ancient writers; "he adds" saith he "many "things out of his own wit, not as they "were really done, but as they might "have been done ||." And is not this notorious forgery? Yea, the Popes them-

* Canus, Loc. Commun. lib. 2. c. 6.

† Idem, ibid.

‡ Harding against Jewel's Apol.

§ Breviar. Rom. Fest. Nicol. 6. Dec.—Fest. S. Blasii, Feb. 13.—Fest. S. Alexii, Julii. 17.

|| Bellarmin. de Scriptor. Eccles.

selves in the latest sort of Breviaries have left many of these fabulous miracles out, since they have done the work now for which they were invented; the doctrines supported by these lies are now generally embraced, and when the arch is completed, the props on which it was raised may be laid aside. Yet still you ought to ask, if these stories were false, how came the infallible Church to put them into her offices? if they were true, why doth she now reject them? And it is observable, that the Roman Church at present pretends but to very few miracles, and the doctors thereof, in this knowing age, are very shy of believing any at all, as one of your own priests proves at large *: The reason of which must needs be, because they fear this inquisitive and learned generation should discover the fraud of them: For since miracles are especially necessary to convince unbelievers, there is far more need of them since the Reformation, when so many disbelieve the Religion of your Church, than was before, when all the

* Rog. Widingt. de Joram. Fidelitatis, c. x. p. 402.

nations

nations of the west were at the devotion thereof. Yet then many miracles are recorded, and now few or none, an argument sufficient to make a wary man believe, there were few real miracles at any time since the settlement of Christianity; only the superstitious and ignorant credulity of the former ages was fit to be abused with such pretences. And now, why are you so stiff in maintaining those opinions which were believed at first upon so slight and false inducements, as these legends and miracles are confessed to be? But this argument is of late so fully handled by two excellent pens*, that I may dismiss it, with my hearty wish you would read those tracts without prejudice, being not written to abuse real Religion, as some tell you, but to undeceive you, and unmask that hypocrisy which hath long walked in the venerable mantle of truth. Nor ought you to be angry at the relaters, but at the inventors of such falsehoods, who have got many fair houses and

* Dr. Stillingfleet of Miracles: And the Reflections on the Romish Devotions.

lands, vast sums of money, and innumerable costly oblations by these fictions, to the scandal of Christianity itself.

My second instance shall be of the artifice of *forging Records*; for, to attest their novel doctrines, especially that of the Pope's Supremacy, they put out divers spurious tracts under illustrious names, which served to wheedle an illiterate age into a reverence for the Roman Church and her opinions, whereas now the cheat is so palpable, that your modern doctors, though they keep the conclusions, disown those feigned books that were the premises from whence they were inferred: Of this nature are the decretal Epistles of all the Popes from Clemens down to Pope Syricius, *an.* 385. formerly cited as good authorities, and transcribed, some parts of them, into your canon law, but now the most learned Romanists confess a great part of them to be mere forgeries*: Baronius styles divers of them Apocry-

* Jo. de Turrecrem. de Eccl. l. 2. c. 101.—Jo. Driedo de dogm. & Scrip. Eccl. l. 1. c. 2.—Cl. Espencæus de Contin. l. 1. c. 2.—Bellarm. de Rom. Pontif. l. 2. c. 14.

phal:

phal * ; and Cardinal Cufanus faith, “that being applied to the times of those “holy men they do betray themselves †.” And indeed these Epistles were never cited by any good old author, and were first brought into France by one Riculfus Archbishop of Mentz five hundred years after those Popes were dead, as Hincmarus Archbishop of Rheims a writer of that age affirms ‡, and Baronius also confesseth §. Nor did the Roman See blush some centuries ago to alledge for its Supremacy the most fabulous donation of Constantine the great, wherein he is pretended to make the Pope head over† the whole Church, and superiour to all the four Patriarchs of the East (naming Constantinople for one, which city was not yet built) giving him in fee the city of Rome, and all Italy, with all the provinces of the western empire, though he gave all these to one of his sons afterwards. This senseless edict

* Baron. Annal. T. 2. an. 102. sec. 6, 7.

† Cufanus de Concord. Cathol. l. 2. c. 34.

‡ Hincm. Rhem. lib. contr. Hincm. Laudunens.

§ Baron. Annal. T. 9. an. 865. sec. 5, 6, 7.

was

was pleaded by several of the Popes in former times to countenance their ambitious pretences *, and of old “ was received “ without suspicion by the most grave “ and learned doctors,” saith Binius †, who yet confesseth there, it was a mere forgery devised, he thinks, by the Greeks, and now-adays all Romanists generally disown it, and indeed it is as ridiculous a forgery as ever the world saw. My brevity will not allow me to enlarge upon this subject, otherwise I could add innumerable examples of like dealing: The absurd council of Sinuessæ, the monstrous recognitions of Clement, the threescore new canons fathered, by Turrian and others, upon the famous general council of Nice, the Pontifical ascribed to Pope Damasus, with innumerable other tracts of the same metal, being all apparent forgeries, and yet long countenanced by Rome to support her unjust supremacy, and other innovations.

* Adrian. Epist. ad Const. & Iren. Act. Concil. Nicen. a. an. 794.—Leo. 9. Ep. ad Michael. Const. an. 1054.

† Not. in Edict. Constant. Concil. tom. 1. p. 154.

My third instance shall be of *suppressing* or *corrupting true Records*, of which take a few examples : The legates of Rome, within less than a hundred years after the general council of Nice, did produce two canons, to prove the Pope's right to receive Appeals, in a famous council of Carthage, *an.* 419, which canons they pretended were made in the aforesaid Nicene council ; but these canons wholly differed from all the best manuscripts of that council then extant, particularly from two eminent ones, which the African fathers sent for from Constantinople and Alexandria ; nor do they agree with those genuine editions of the Nicene council now extant ; and indeed the council of Carthage received not these pretended canons of Nice, but esteemed them to have been corrupted, as we do at this day : Not long after, to abet the Roman supremacy, Pope Leo writing to Theodosius the Emperour, cites a canon of a particular and dubious council at Sardica, of later date and less authority, affirming it to be a canon of the general council at Nice *. The edi-

* Leo. Pa. Epist. ad Theodos. Concil. tom. 2.

tion of the councils put out by Dionysius Exiguus, about *an.* 520. being for a long time the sole approved copy extant in these parts of the world, doth, in favour of the Pope's supremacy, leave out divers canons even of general councils which seem to make against it *, though the said canons are recorded in Zonaras and Balsamon, and in this age confessed to have been made in those councils by the Romanists themselves; but in the time when the supremacy was in hatching, it was not thought expedient those canons should be known. It were endless to reckon up all the additions, diminutions, and alterations, which all the Roman editions of the councils since are guilty of; and because an ingenious essay hath been made that way by a late author, I shall refer my reader thither, † and out of infinite examples conclude with one evident piece of falsification: The xxxvth canon of the

* Exempli gr. Tres Canon. Concil. 1. Constantinop.—
Omnes Can. Concil. Ephes. Oecum. 3. Canon. 28. Concil.
Chalcedon. Oecum. 4.

† Roman Forgeries, print. Lond. 1673.

council of Laodicea, forbids the faithful to call on the name of angels, which being a condemnation of the doctrine and practice of Rome in *praying to angels*, the later editions of this council have impudently put in *angulos* [angles, or corners] instead of *angelos*, [angels*] though all the Greek copies † and Fathers read ἀγγέλους ‡, and all the old latin exemplars have *angelos* §. Yea, Pope Adrian himself, before this worship of angels came up, read it [*angelos*] in that epitome of canons which he sent to Charles the Great, *an.* 773. Thus they corrupt the councils to suit them to their own opinions: Nor have single fathers and ancient authors fared better: St. Cyprian put out by Pamelius is altered in many places contrary to the ancient copies; for example, where

* Angulos legunt. Merlin. tom. 1. Concil. edit. an. 1530. Colon.—Crabbe p. 226. ed. an. 1538. Colon. Caranza sum. Concil. pag. 82. Lugd. 1568.

† Ap. Zonar. Balfam. & Harmenopulum.

‡ Theodor. in Colof. 3.—Photius Nomo-Canon. Tit. 12. c. 9.

§ Dionys. Exig. Cod. Can. n. 138.—Crescon. breviar. Can. sec. 90.—Fulgent. Ferrand. Brev. Can. sec. 184.

the father faith, "the Church is founded "*super Petram* *," Pamelius changes it into *super Petrum*, "upon Peter," instead of "upon a rock†;" and Ludovicus Vives, a Romanist, assures us that there are ten or twelve lines, positively asserting Purgatory, put into the printed copies of St. Aug. *de civitate Dei*, l. 21, c. 24. contrary to the ancient manuscripts ‡. Fulbertus Carnotensis quotes St. Augustine, saying of the sacramental bread, "This then is a figure," the Roman editions put in, "as a Heretic will "say," when indeed St. Augustine says so, and speaks his own sense §. Aimonius speaking of the 8th council faith, "They "determined about images otherwise than "the orthodox Fathers had decreed:" and so Baronius reads ||; but the modern printed copies, quite contrary, put in, "according as the orthodox Fathers had "decreed **." But why do I stand upon

* Cyprian. Ep. 40. edit.—Gryphii p. 52. Morellii 124.

† Editio Pamel. Ep. 40. p. 7.

‡ Ludov. Vives. Com. in Aug. de Civ. Dei, l. 21. c. 24.

§ Fulbertus Carnot. edit. an. 1608. pag. 168.

|| Baron. Annal. tom. x. an. 869.

** Aimonius de Gestis Franc. 5. cap. 8.

particular instances? This wickedness which all other men account the same villany with suborning false witnesses, stopping the mouths of the true, and counterfeiting hands and seals, is owned by the present church of Rome: And Sixtus Senensis doth highly extol Pope Pius V. for his most holy decree, “to burn all books “which were accounted heretical, to “purge and cleanse all catholic authors, “and especially the writings of the Fathers*.” Now in what manner they effect this most holy work, the Belgic Inquisitors, appointed by the Roman See, shall tell you: “We strike out,” say they, “many errors; in other of the ancients, “we extenuate and excuse them, or by “feigning a commentitious gloss, either “deny, or fix a commodious sense to their “words†.” Thus they served St. Ambrose’s works, cancelling, and altering whole pages together, contrary to all the old manuscripts, as appeared by the original papers which Savarius the stationer

* Epistol. Nuncup. ante Bibliothecam Sixti Senens.

† Censores Belg. de libro Bertrami.

shewed to Francis Junius, according to which the Inquisitors had ordered him to print that edition: *Lugd. an. 1559* *. Thus they left the story of Pope Joan out of the copies of Anastasius Biblioth. though the manuscripts had the said story in them as Marquar. Freherus testified, who lent them the said manuscripts †; and I might fill a volume with instances of like unjust dealings; but I will only add the memorable account which Boxhornius one of your Divinity Professors at Lovain gives of himself, viz. “That he, having
 “been employed by the Inquisitors to
 “strike out at least six hundred places of
 “the ancients, which seemed to make
 “against the Roman doctrines, was so
 “troubled in mind upon it, that it was
 “an occasion of his turning Protestant,
 “and made him resolve to quit that Religion which could not defend itself without such manifest impostures ‡.” And I wish the consideration thereof might

* Junii Præf. ad Indicem Expurg. Cens. Belg.

† Blond. Epist. ante librum de Joan. Papiss. c. 3.

‡ Henr. Boxhorn. de Eucharistia, l. 3. initio.

have

have the same effect upon you; for the matter of fact is so evident, that the *Index Expurgatorius*, the book which directs these falsifications, is now come into Protestant hands to the eternal infamy of the Roman Church, whose people cannot rationally trust to any author which comes through their priests' dishonest hands: And since false books are invented; true and genuine writers altered and corrupted, or else wholly prohibited, if they seem to make against them, (for which cause Clement VIII. puts the bible into his index of prohibited books) and all editions but their own condemned and burnt by the Roman Church, the people must needs be deluded into a persuasion, that all these new doctrines are primitive truths, when indeed this abominable forging evidently shews, that the Pope and his Conclave think that both scripture and antiquity do make against these innovations, and would discover the imposture, if they were suffered to speak out; to whom I may justly apply the words of Arnobius, "To intercept
" what is written, and to design to smother
" ther

“ther published records, is not to defend
“the Gods, but to fear the testimony of
“the truth * :” And because “good
“men” as St. Augustine saith “will not
“deceive; but neither good nor evil men
“would willingly be deceived †,” I may
suppose that the most devoted Romanist
cannot but discern how unsafe he is in
believing, as those men teach him, who
make no conscience to invent, impose, and
pretend things never so false, provided
they may thereby advance their church’s
interest, or their own private ends: They
who dare write Lies, will not be afraid to
speak them, and they who corrupt the re-
mains of the holy saints deceased, are not
to be trusted with the souls of the living;
and whoever gives himself up to such
guides, unnaturally chuses his own delu-
sion, and desperately hazards his own sal-
vation: St. Ambrose adviseth us, if we
chuse a guide, to be careful he be endued
with two properties, honesty and pru-
dence: “for his honesty will be a security

* Arnob. adv. Gent. lib. 1.

† Aug. de verb. Apost. Ser. 32.

“that

“ that he will not deceive us, and his prudence will prevent our suspicion of his being deceived himself * ;” which wise counsel if you follow, you must no longer adhere to these unfaithful leaders : Nor ought you to fear to forsake them, either because your forefathers relied on them, or because the doctrines that they teach were once so generally received here ; since your Forefathers lived in an age wherein there was little means to detect these forgeries, whereas you are by Providence fallen into those times, wherein all the dishonest arts of that Church are discovered so plainly, that if your Forefathers had seen as much as you may see, they would have forsaken Rome long since, and not have left you this objection to make. Nor are the doctrines ever the better for being generally received, inasmuch as they were imposed on the world by such evil means as force and fraud ; which being thus made evident, you can no longer wonder how these innovations came to be so generally believed, being propagated by

* Ambros. de Offic. l. 2. c. 8.

as wicked means as they were invented for evil ends: So that now what the Roman Church thought would secure her opinions, if it could have been kept close, must needs make them odious, being once laid open, and the impostures, which they designed should tie men to their Church, will, as some of their own doctors have prophesied, be an occasion to make all discerning men turn from it; for, “Religion is to be defended” saith Lactantius “not with wickedness but fidelity, for if you attempt to defend Religion by evil arts, you do not defend, but pollute and violate it*.”

* Lactant. Inst. lib. 6. c. 19.

SECTION

SECTION IV.

Whether the said opinions tend to advance the ends of true Religion?

NOW though it be altogether unlikely those principles should be either true or good, which stand in need of such arts to propagate and defend them, yet because you have been so long accustomed to call these things Religion, and it is not easy to lay aside our rooted prepossessions, we will pass to the third enquiry, *viz.* “Whether the things themselves be good in their own nature, and parts of true Religion?” Now we may try this by considering what are the ends of true Religion, and whether these principles serve to advance those ends? True Religion therefore hath three principal ends: 1. To advance the honour of God; 2. To assist us in the devout worshipping of him; 3. To teach us to imitate him by a holy life and conversation. Let us here therefore examine, whether the peculiar articles of the Roman Church do

do not hinder rather than promote these ends; for if it appear these principles are dishonourable to God, impediments to devotion, and hindrances to a holy life, then those doctrines are also evil in their own nature, and they can be no real parts of a good or true Religion: Nor must you retain them because you have once judged them good, if upon trial they prove to be otherwise. “We must be firm to our principles,” saith Epictetus, “yet not to all of them, but only to those which are right; we must begin at the right end, and first lay the foundation by considering whether our principles be good or evil, and after build upon that by constancy and firmness of resolution*.” Wherefore, respecting the FIRST of these ends, let me desire you patiently and impartially to enquire—Ist. If there be not some of your principles and practices which tend to the dishonour of God. If it be a dishonour to the Divine Majesty for a mortal man to contradict his laws by contrary constitutions, I fear your Church will

* Arrianus in Epict. lib. 2. c. 15.

hardly be found innocent : For do they not command things which God hath forbidden in as plain words as can be spoken, as in the case of images, *Exod.* xx. 4? and prayer in an unknown tongue, *1 Cor.* xiv. 28? Do they not forbid things which God hath allowed, as in the case of Priests' marriage, *Heb.* xiii. 4. *1 Cor.* vii. 2.—ix. 5. *1 Tim.* iii. 2. 12? and taking the cup from the people? which they have decreed with a *non obstante*, that is, notwithstanding our Lord Jesus appointed the contrary. Do they not presume to dispence with the very laws of God, in many cases of matrimony and divorce, of vows, oaths, leagues, and contracts? So that “ laying aside the commandment of God, “ ye hold the tradition of men,” as our Saviour speaks, *Mark* vii. 8. Your holy Father, who doth all this, may think himself the greatest upon earth, but if our Lord Jesus tell us the truth, “ he shall be “ called the least in the kingdom of Heaven, *Matt.* v. 19.

2dly.

* 2dly. Is it not a great derogation to an infinite and invifible Being, to be represented by an image, and worfhipped under fuch representations, agreeable to the worfhip which Heathens gave to their falfe Gods *, and fome Heretics to our Saviour †, but contrary to the decrees and practice of the primitive Christians ‡, and to the great fcandal of modern Jews, who call your Churches “houfes of Idols” upon this account §?

3dly. Doth not the doctrine of merits caft a palpable difhonour upon the glorious redemption wrought by Jefus Chrift? Sure I am, divers of the ancients, as well as of your later writers, think fo ||. Nor can we think it to be lefs than blafphemy,

* Lactant. Inft. lib. 2. cap. 2.

† Irenæus adv. hæref. lib. 1. cap. 24.

‡ Concil. Eliber. Can. 36.—Origen. in Celf. lib. 7.—Tertull. Apol. cap. 30.

§ Cornel. Agrip. de Vanit. Scien. cap. 57.

|| Aug. de Verb. Apof. Ser. 15.—Bern. de Annun. Serm. 1. pag. 123.—Durand. in Sent. lib. 2. dift. 8. qu. 1.

—Wald. de Sacr. Rit. tom. 3. tit. 1. cap. 7.

which Bellarmine affirmeth, *viz.* “that a
 “man may be said to be his own Re-
 “deemer without any injury to Christ*.”
 Doubtless those who fancy they can re-
 deem themselves, and satisfy for their own
 sins, cannot but have a mean esteem of
 Christ’s merits and satisfaction.

4thly. Your praying to angels and
 saints, especially the blessed Virgin, mak-
 ing them your mediators and patrons, and
 asking the greatest things of them, hath
 made prayers to God by Jesus Christ to be
 generally neglected by the vulgar people,
 who say ten times as many *Ave Marias* as
Pater nosters, and wickedly fancy the
 blessed Virgin and holy saints are more
 compassionate than our Lord Jesus. “This
 “doctrine,” saith a very wise man, “hath
 “wrought that general effect in all coun-
 “tries subject to the Papacy, that men
 “have more assiance, and aslume to them-
 “selves a greater conceit of comfort in
 “the patronage of the creatures and ser-
 “vants of God, than of God himself, the

* Bellarm. de Purgat. lib. i. cap. 14.

“ Prince

“Prince and the Creator * :” a fault which St. Paul lays to the Heathens’ charge, *Rom. i. 25.* How dishonourable must it needs be, to leave Jesus that one Mediator, 1 *Tim. ii. 5.* who always doth certainly hear us, and is most apt to pity us, and best able to help us, to pray to God by those, concerning whom your own doctors doubt whether they know any thing done here†, and the scripture plainly saith they do not ‡; yea, reason shews it is impossible they should hear many prayers in divers places at once. To have the worship paid to the master and the servants the same in all outward expressions, only differing in a nice school-distinction, must needs be an affront to the King of saints. If you have any tendernefs or zeal for the honour of Jesus, it cannot but be offensive to you, to observe how your legends tell of greater miracles wrought by some of the fabulous saints, than ever Jesus

* Sand. Europæ Spec. pag. 5, 6, 7.

† Gratian. caus. 13. qu. 2. cap. 19.—2 Decret. Gloss. Interlin. in Isa. 63.

‡ Job xiv. 21, 22.—Eccles. 9. 5.—Isa. lxiii. 16.

wrought; to hear one of your Church say, "that Christ did nothing which St. Francis did not do, yea, that he did more than Christ himself*." What is more injurious to the honour of the Divine Majesty, than your St. Bonaventure putting in the name of the Virgin Mary into David's psalms instead of the name of God; to have her adored by the heathenish title of the "Queen of Heaven †," and invoked by the impious name of "Mother of the whole Trinity ‡?" These things are rather blasphemy than devotion, and as dishonourable to God as they are dissonant from antiquity. "Let none," saith Epiphanius, "adore Mary; but why do I mention a woman? nay, not any man: this reverence is due only to God, nor are the angels capable of such glorification §."

* Lib. Conform. fol. 1149.

† Jer. vii. 18. Ubi videtur esse nomen Junonis Olympiæ.

‡ Missal. Polon. fol. 237.

§ Epiph. adv. Collyridianos Panar. hæc. 79.

5thly. The supposing a necessity of superadding the saints' merits and the daily sacrifice of the mass, to the merit of that "one offering for sin which Jesus made on the cross," *Heb. ix. 28.* is an evident lessening the value and sufficiency of the death of Christ.

6thly. The calling of the holy scripture a "nose of wax," a "leaden rule," and an "inky Gospel * ;" the putting in the Apocryphal books, wherein are some things wicked †, and others notoriously false ‡, into an equal rank with the word of God indited by the spirit; and the making their own traditions to be equal in value to it §, are palpable dishonours to God who writ the holy scripture. These things, my friends, can hardly be reckoned matters tending to the honour of God, unless you can suppose the cancelling his laws,

* Pighius Hierarch. lib. 3.—Canus, lib. 3. cap. 2.—Turrian. in Sadeel, pag. 99.

† 2 Macc. xiv. 41, 42.

‡ Ecclus. xlvi. 20.—2 Esdras vi. 40.

§ Concil. Trident. Sess. 4.

disparaging his nature, undervaluing the merits, the mercies, and the miracles of Jesus by cheap and odious comparisons, the diminution of his worship, and making him sharer with his servants therein, and the vilifying of his divine Word, be no dishonour to him you pretend to serve.

SECONDLY. Let us examine whether these doctrines do assist you in the devout worshipping of God? It is very suspicious that that Church doth not teach a right way of serving God, which deceives you in the first principle of Religion, viz. "That God alone is to be worshipped:" a sentence so odious to the Roman doctors, that the *Index Expurgatorius* blots it out of the indices of St. Athanasius' and St. Augustine's works*, and if they could do it undiscovered, they would blot it out of the Bible also, *Matth.* iv. 10. But there it shall stand for ever to reprove those, who divide religious worship between God and his

* Adorari solius Dei est; Deleatur ex Ind. operum Athanasii. Indice lib. prohib. & Expurg. pag. 52. Madrit. an. 1627. item ex Ind. Op. S. Aug. ibid. pag. 56.

creatures, thereby diminishing that devotion which entirely belongs to the Divine Majesty, since affections are most vigorous when placed upon one object, and if they be dispersed among many, grow weak and trifling; whence we may conclude, the Protestant who worships none but God, is the greater lover of him, and worships with a more united and fervent devotion. As for your public worship, it is attended with so many ceremonies as must needs disturb the devotion as well of the priests as the people; there is such frequent bowing, crossing, prostration, sprinkling with holy water, beating the breast, smoking with Incense, &c. that the mind is taken off from a steady intention upon the inward and main part of the duty, while it is entertained with such variety of outward rites: "For our mind," saith Quintilian, "cannot sincerely intend its whole self upon many things at once; whatever new object it looks upon, it gives over the thoughts of that which it first propounded to itself:" And this is most evident where the objects are so different

different as sensible and intellectual things are: “For where the senses and their perceptions are vigorously employed, there the intellectual powers cease to act,” as a great philosopher observes.* So that it is your passions and your fancies that are wrought upon by these outward ceremonies, not your mind nor the higher faculties of your Souls; and therefore that which you think devotion, I doubt is but a fantastical and false fire, not kindled by the love of God, nor warming your nobler powers at all; and those steady, rational and spiritual desires, which flow from an undisturbed contemplation of the Divine Goodness and are the very life of prayer, I fear you are strangers to, being so often taken off and diverted by variety of sensible representations. Again, the making all your public prayers in an unknown tongue, destroys all true devotion in the people; St. Clemens of Alexandria tells us of some Heathens “who thought those prayers most effectual

* Porphy. de Abstin. lib. i. sec. 41.

“ which

“ which where uttered in a barbarous language *.” But Christians know, that prayer is the desiring something of God, and if the mind be not exercised in this desire, it avails nothing; but where the words are not understood, the mind cannot desire the things mentioned, so that none can properly pray in an unknown tongue, nor so much as rationally say “ Amen”, 1 *Cor.* xiv. 16. By this absurd practice therefore, you, who are unlearned, spend the time of the public offices in admiring and gazing, not in joining with the priest or praying. And because the people have no employment while the mass lasteth, they spend the whole time usually in talking and laughing privately, as those, who travel in catholic countries, do inform us †. And it may occasion your wonder, why the Roman Church should so obstinately refuse to reform so irrational a custom, which St. Paul hath written a whole chapter to condemn, 1 *Cor.* xiv. the force of whose ar-

* Clem. Alex. Stromat. i.

† Europ. Spec. pag. 10.

guments

guments and authority, hath made your wisest doctors declare against it. "By St. Paul's doctrine", saith Card. Cajetan, "it is better for the edifying of the Church, that public prayers were made in the vulgar tongue than in Latin". * To the same purpose Lyra †; and your Romish annotators say, "When a man prayeth in a strange tongue, which himself understandeth not, it is not so fruitful for instruction to him, as if he knew particularly what he prayed ‡." Gabriel Biel also gives several reasons why prayers should be in a known tongue, saying, It is better—1. "For stirring up devotion"—2. "For enlightening the mind"—3. "For retaining the things in memory"—4. "For keeping the thoughts from wandering §." Yet your admired Church will oppose reason and scripture, and deprive all the common people that are of her communion, of the exercise of their

* Cajet. com. in 1 Corinth. 14. 17.

† Lyr. in Loc.

‡ Rhem. Test. annot. on 1 Cor. 14.

§ Gab. Biel in Can. Miss. Lect. 62.

devotion in her offices, rather than so far seem to confess a fault, as to amend it; chusing rather to let you lose the benefit of worshipping God, than to reform the most unjust customs which she hath once espoused: But, if you be wise, if that Church will not pray in such a language as you can join in, you will go over to the Church of England, where you may “pray with
“the spirit and with understanding also.”

1 *Cor.* xiv. 15. In the next place your private prayers are not so good a way of worshipping God as other Christians have; the images and pictures, which the Heathens first taught your doctors to call “the books of
“the unlearned *,” and which are placed before you in time of prayer, are no help, but an hindrance to all true devotion; for while your lips are repeating your oraisons, your mind is taken up with the beauty, colour, lineaments and workmanship of the image: so that your own conscience will tell you, by these diversions you often “draw near to God with your lips,
“when your hearts are far from him,”

* Porphy. ap. Euseb. Præpar. Evang. lib. 3.

which is a vain worship; *Matth. xv. 8.* and the casuists of your Church, foreseeing that images would take off the attention, have determined most impiously, “that it is not necessary to prayer that
 “the person praying should think of what
 “he speaks* :” a doctrine suitable enough to that slight and formal worship which your Church appoints. And the ordinary people among you think they have prayed sufficiently when they have pattered over so many little oraisons as agree to the number of their beads: a new invention, wherein Papists and Turks agree†, which came not into the Church till all serious devotion was ceased‡, it being a sign he minds his prayers but little, that needs a string of beads to reckon them by; yet these beads, saith one of your own authors, “are now the chief instruments of
 “the hypocrite’s counterfeit devotion §.”
 I shall not ravel into the body of your

* Suarez. de Orat. lib. 3. cap. 14. & Salmeron.

† Bellonii histor. obs. lib. 2. cap. 72.

‡ An. Dom. 1090.

§ Polid. Virgil. de invent. rer. lib. 5. cap. 9.

prayers,

prayers, since the author of the *Reflections on the Romish devotions*, hath sufficiently done this ; but I cannot but remark, that the repeating Ave Mary and the name of Jesus so many times over, as in those fifteen little prayers in the psalter of Jesus, where the name of Jesus is thrice mentioned in each prayer, and each prayer is ordered to be said ten times over ; and those numerous names of saints repeated in your litanies with no petition annexed but *Ora pro nobis*, this way of praying is so far from agreeing with the primitive worship of God among the Christians, that it is evidently derived from that heathenish superstition of praying “ by repeating a hundred names of their deities “ together, interposing nothing but *O bear “ us * ;*” and in this manner Baal’s priests are supposed to pray: 1 *Kings* xviii. 26. but Jesus saith to Christians, “ When ye “ pray, use not vain repetitions as the “ Heathens do, for they think that they “ shall be heard for their much speaking:”

* Selden de Diis Syris, pag. 52.—Saubertus de Sacrific. cap. 13. pag. 296.

Matt. vi. 7. Wherefore, though you have admired this trifling way of worship, when you knew no better, yet if you would acquaint yourselves with the solid and rational way of praying prescribed in the church of England (wherein great things, in an exact method, in plain and proper phrases, and in a known language, are asked of God alone in the name of Jesus Christ) you would easily leave off those formal, vain, and superficial devotions, which can neither be acceptable to God, nor profitable unto yourselves.

THIRDLY. Let us pass to the last of these particulars and enquire, If the doctrines of Rome, differing from those of England, do tend to promote our imitating God by a holy life and conversation; without which all our worship is in vain: "For
" it is a folly and miserable error," saith St. Augustine, " to humble yourself before
" him in adoration, to whom you chuse
" to be unlike in conversation, and to
" give him religious worship, whose ex-
" ample you will not follow; since the
" sum of all Religion is to imitate him
" you

“you worship*.” Now there are several principles of the Roman church which seem to hinder an holy life; as first, the custom of confessing to a Priest weekly or monthly, together with the absolution following of course upon this confession: this is, I fear, a great hindrance to amendment of life, at which it pretends to aim, for while men rely on this remedy, they go on without fear in those sins for which they have so easy a cure at hand, like those who venture without scruple on dangerous meats, because they have their Physicians beside them: 'Tis true there is a penance enjoined sometimes, but it is such a one as the rich may buy off and the poor may undergo, and yet both retain the sin, because the penance is not its proper cure, for the going on pilgrimages, giving money, saying or reading over such proportions of legends or little chiming prayers, with others far more impertinent, tend not to rectify a vicious habit, and a plaister on the toe may as soon cure the head-ach, as these penances effect a re-

* Aug. de Civ. Dei, lib. 8. cap. 17.

formation, or obtain a pardon at God's hands: And yet all men see, when the day of confession is over, and the penance past, that you are generally confident of a pardon, and fancy you begin upon a new score. It is not easy to enumerate all the devices which your Church hath invented to convey pardon of sins, holy water, Relicks of saints, visiting some certain Churches, saying some certain prayers, making oblations of money to such and such uses, indulgences, and other such things, so that he that hath money need never want pardon from Rome. But alas! these things can never really take away the guilt of one sin, and yet they embolden men to commit many; "for the multitude of sinners increaseth, when hope is given that sin may be bought off, and men easily fall into those sins for which money will purchase their pardon," as Arnobius said to the Heathens, who relied on such like fantastical means of remission*. And we may say of the guides of your Church, as Seneca in a like case,

* Arnob. adv. Gentes, lib. 7. pag. 216.

"they

“ they sin more in such absolutions, than
 “ the offender doth in the crime * :” for
 by persuading men they can have remission on so easy terms, they make them secure before they are safe, because Almighty God, who only finally can remit, never promised pardon on these terms, and it is only those, who forsake as well as confess their sins, to whom he will shew mercy, *Prov.* xxviii. 13 ; and if either the Pope or any of his substitutes pretend to have power to forgive sins on any other terms, they abuse those who are so weak as to believe them, and make them forfeit their souls, I doubt, for the sad price of this credulity. St. Basil saith truly, “ The
 “ power of absolving was not absolutely
 “ given, but upon condition of the Penitent’s reformation † ;” and we tell our people more sincerely, that if a priest absolve them a thousand times over, and if they give never so much money, without amendment of life they can have no pardon, according as scripture itself teaches ‡,

* Senec. Ep. 97.

† Basil. reg. brev. qu. 15.

‡ Mic. vi. 7.

and

and the holy Fathers also; “ If thou givest
 “ all that thou hast, and dost not forsake
 “ thy sins, thou art twice deceived, both in
 “ losing thy money and thy pardon also *.”

Again, as if the Roman church designed to make men think their own actual holiness were never necessary, they have other devices to persuade you into a belief of coming off well at the end of your life, howsoever ill you have spent it. The Heretics in Tertullian's time said, “ It
 “ was a meritorious thing to be of their
 “ party † ;” and you are told it is a ready way of salvation to die in the communion of the Roman church, and if you can but receive the sacraments of that Church, and be absolved by one of their priests, you scarce doubt of obtaining Heaven at last ; and if you have no good works of your own, they persuade you the Church can sell you the merits of the saints ; or, if you should drop into Purgatory by the way, the pains of that, they say, are not endless, and if you give libe-

* Augustin. homil. 2. ex. 50. hom.

† Tertul. de Præscrip. adv. Hæret. cap. 41.

rally on your death-beds, or if any others afterwards give for you, to purchase so many masses and other prayers for your soul, you will ere long be delivered from thence : All which notorious delusions do miserably deceive poor men, and most mischievously encourage them to put off their repentance, and to resolve not to be troubled with holiness in the way, since they fancy they shall come off so easily in the end. And alas ! they are as false as they are mischievous ; for the ancient Fathers unanimously affirm no man's estate can be altered after this life, " But as the last day
 " of a man's life finds him, so the last day
 " of the world finds him * ;" " nor will
 " any thing help thee," saith St. Augustine,
 " but what is done while thou art here†." Out of innumerable such testimonies, that of St. Salvian may serve : " Although a
 " man should have so pious a son, who,
 " for alleviating his father's punishment,
 " would desire to give all the goods he
 " left behind him, it would do him no

* Augustin. Epist. 80.

† Idem de Verb. Apost. Ser. 21.

" good,

“good; for the piety of the son can do
“nothing to procure that rest to a man
“after death, which his own impiety and
“infidelity hath denied him*.” Finally,
these and the like principles make so many
infamous men and women, so many thieves
and murderers, debauched and profane
persons to take sanctuary in the Roman
church, because the tenets thereof seem
not to oblige them to forsake their evil
ways, but reconcile wickedness and sal-
vation together: so that this Religion
tends not to persuade men to holiness of
life, and therefore is no good Religion.

I grant there are some persons in that
Church who live better than these opinions
engage them to do, and do not draw those
conclusions into their practice which na-
turally follow from these principles; but
that is only an evidence of the excellent
virtue of such persons, but no proof of the
goodness of these doctrines; and if these
men be holy in a religion which gives
such encouragement to evil, doubtless they
would be more holy by far, if they were

* Salvian. ad Eccles. Cath. lib. 3.

taught better things: I shall only add, that as the Roman church is too loose in matters pertaining to God's laws, so she is too strict in matters pertaining to her own constitutions, like the old Pharisees who "tithed mint and anise, and neglected the weightier matters of the law," *Matt. xxiii. 23.* which is a great obstruction to real holiness; for when men place religion in ceremonies and slight things, while they are curious in these matters, they neglect greater, and think by observing the rules of the Church, they compensate for passing by the laws of God. Your own Ordinary Gloss saith, "that it is superstition, when Religion is placed in observing the ordinances of men *;" and if so, then your wonderful strictness in crossing, bowing, using holy water, abstinence on certain days, wearing crosses, &c. in which you have placed so much Religion, are no better than superstition. It cannot be denied that most Roman Catholics are more afraid to eat flesh on a fasting-day than to curse or swear; they will be drunk on a

* Gloss. Ordin. ad Colos. 2.

Holyday, which God forbids, but not work on it because the Church forbids it; many of them dare fornicate and debauch, who dare not neglect confession, nor read a book written by a supposed Heretic; and generally, they are punctual in crossing, sprinkling, bowing and observing all orders of the Church, even such as live in the open breach of God's commandments, and yet fancy themselves more sure of Heaven than the most pious and holy Protestant. Thus this Religion is too strict where God gives us more liberty, and too remiss where his holy law hath bound us with eternal and indispensable bonds; and it is designed to promote obedience to the Roman church, rather than inward holiness towards God. The effect of all which considerations is this, That whosoever sincerely desires to glorify God and worship him with a rational devotion, and whoever would imitate him by a holy life, ought not to choose or retain such a religion, whose principles tend so evidently to the dishonour of God's name, the hindrance of true devotion,
and

and to the rendering a holy life unnecessary: And as it was proved before, that the appropriated articles of the Roman faith were not ancient, nor induced for pious ends, nor propagated by honest means; so now it is evidenced, the articles are not good in their own nature, and therefore there is no reason why you should not renounce them, unless you retain them in meer reverence to the authority of the Pope who doth impose them, which matter is the subject of our last inquiries.

SECTION V.

Whether the Roman Bishop have sufficient authority to impose the said opinions upon all christian Churches?

THE last, and almost the only shelter
that your doctors fly to at this day
for the defence of your principles is, *That*
I *the*

the Bishop of Rome is the sole vicar of Christ, the infallible and only judge of controversies, and the supreme head of the universal church; and hereby their adherents are awed into the retaining all his decrees of what nature soever they be. But let me beg leave to advise you, not to lay so much stress upon these titles and authority, till you have seriously examined by what right the Pope lays claim to them; for his power had need be very great, and his proofs very good, upon the credit whereof you receive so many new and suspicious articles of Religion, some of which we ought not to receive though preached by an angel. *Gal. i. 8, 9.* And first, though we stand not much upon titles, you may note that the name of vicar of Christ is never given to the Pope in the first ages; and when this title came into use, it was not appropriated to the Bishop of Rome, but other Bishops and Priests are styled, vicars of Christ also, even by a Pope of Rome *, as also by an undoubted friend of the Roman

* Euseb. Pap. Decret. Ep. 3.

church *, and by our own Saxon law † ; so that there is no reason for the Roman Bishop to challenge any propriety in this title, or any special privilege by virtue thereof. Secondly, As to his being an infallible judge and the supreme head of the catholic church throughout the world, you may remember we have proved there are more Christians in the world who deny this supremacy of Rome, than there are who do acknowledge it ; and if the belief of this infallible headship be the reason why you receive other articles of faith, then this is the most fundamental article of all others, and ought to be the best attested : And if our Lord Jesus had designed to make St. Peter and his successors at Rome (not at Antioch) such supreme infallible Judges, we may expect he would have set down this article plainly in holy scripture, and not have left his sole visible Vice-gerent to the suspicion of bearing witness to himself. As for that place,

* Epist. Wil. Senon. ad Hoveden. an. 1171.

† Legibus Hydenf. ap. Spelm. tom. 1. pag. 440.

“Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will
 “I build my church,” *Mat. xvi. 18*, it
 is indeed by the Popes in their forged de-
 cretals expounded as a confirmation of
 their pretences to supremacy, but the Fa-
 thers take this rock, not for St. Peter’s
 person, but for his faith which he con-
 fessed, and for Christ himself the object
 thereof; so St. Augustine *, Nazianzen †,
 St. Cyril ‡, St. Chrysostome §, St. Am-
 brose ||, and Hilary **, expound the place;
 and if so, this belongs no more to St.
 Peter, than to the rest of the Apostles who
 confessed the same faith, and belongs no
 otherwise to the Pope, than as he varies
 not from St. Peter’s faith, and so far it
 belongs to all orthodox Bishops with re-
 spect to their several churches. And for
 “the keys of the kingdom of Heaven,”
ver. 19. they were given as much to the

* Aug. de verb. Dom. Ser. 13.

† Nazianz. Test. de vet. Testam.

‡ Cyril. de Trin. lib. 4.

§ Chrysost. hom. 55. in Matth.

|| Ambros. Com. in Ephes. 2.

** Hilary. de Trin. lib. 2. cap. 6.

other

other Apostles as to St. Peter, *Matth.* xviii. 18, (as also the aforesaid Fathers do observe) being all equally sharers in the power of the keys and all foundations, as well as St. Peter *, so that St. Cyprian plainly tells us, "The rest of the Apostles "were as great as St. Peter, endowed "with an equal share of honour and "power †;" nor do we find that ever St. Peter pretended to any power over the other Apostles. "Peter, James, and John, "though preferred by Christ," saith Eusebius, "before the rest, challenged not to "themselves the glory of Primacy, but "chose James the Just, Bishop of the "Apostles ‡;" and if any were greatest, it was St. James, who was President in that first council at Jerusalem, and did determine the question there, though St. Peter was present §. Yea, Clemens, Bishop of Rome, in the first decretal epistle,

* Aug. in Johan. Tract. 118.—Ambros. in Psal. 38.—
Origen. in Matt. Tract. 1.—Hilarius de Trinit. lib. 6.—
Hieron. in Jovin. lib. 1.

† Cypr. de Unit. Eccles.

‡ Euseb. Eccles. hist. lib. 2. cap. 1.

§ Acts xv. 13.

(a good evidence against the inventors thereof) styles this very St. James “ Bishop
 “ of Bishops, governing the holy church
 “ of the Hebrews at Jerusalem, and also
 “ all the churches, which were every
 “ where founded by the Providence of
 “ God *.” And an ancient council calls
 Jerusalem the “ Mother of all churches †;”
 but as for the Primacy of Rome, there is
 no genuine author for the first three cen-
 turies takes any notice of it, and Æneas
 Sylvius ‡, afterwards Pope, confesseth,
 “ there was little respect paid to Rome
 “ before the Nicene council.” If Poly-
 crates and the Asian Bishops had known
 of this infallibility and supremacy, they
 would not have opposed Pope Victor’s
 opinion, nor despised his excommunication
 so boldly as they did; neither would Ire-
 næus, who calls the Bishops of Rome no
 more but Presbyters, have presumed to
 reprove the same Victor for his arrogance
 and indiscretion, as we find he did §. St.

* Decret. Epist. Clement. I. in Titul. Epist.

† Concil. Constant. I. Ep. ad Dam.

‡ Ene. Sylv. Ep. 288.

§ Euseb. Eccles. hist. lib. 5. cap. 24.

Cyprian

Cyprian surely never heard of this power of the Roman Bishop, who calls Cornelius, Bishop of that See, no more but brother and colleague, and gives to Pope Stephen, his successor at Rome, the titles of *false Apostle, Schismatic, friend to Heretics, and enemy to Christians*, utterly despising his judgment, and not regarding his determinations *. Besides, if this supremacy had been believed in the first ages of the Church, the Roman Bishop's sense would have been enquired of concerning all controverted places of scripture, his decrees cited to silence Heretics, and all appeals must have been made finally to him: He also should have called, and presided in, all eminent councils, whereas Cardinal Cusanus affirms, "That the Emperors or their
"Deputies were Presidents in eight general councils †." Nor did the fourth general council at Chalcedon suppose that the Roman Bishop had any supremacy given him from Christ, when that coun-

* Cyprian. ad Pompei. Ep. 74.

† Cusan. de Concor. Cath. lib. 3. cap. 6.

cil faith, "Rome hath justly had the privileges given unto it by the Fathers, because it was the seat of the empire;" and for the same reason they "grant equal privileges to the Bishop of Constantinople*." Yea, St. Gregory, Bishop of Rome, faith, "The Fathers of the council of Chalcedon were they who offered his Predecessors the title of universal Bishop, which yet they accepted not†:" And to convince us that this universal supremacy is a late device, it is evident, that it was not only unknown to others in the first age, but to the very Popes themselves, as these few instances will shew: Liberius, Bishop of Rome, *an.* 350. sending the confession of his faith to Athanasius desireth his approbation thereof, "That I may know," faith he, "whether I am of the same judgment with you in matters of faith, and that I may be more certain, and readily obey your commands‡." And when the Bishop of

* Concil. Chal. Can. 28. *an.* 451.

† Gregor. Epist. lib. 7. Ep. 30.

‡ Athanas. Ep. ad Epictet.

Constantinople began to call himself universal Bishop, Pope Gregory, in his epistle to Mauritius the Emperor, saith, “ He admires at the arrogance of assuming this new title, which none of the Bishops of Rome had ever accepted of, a title blasphemous to christian ears;” and with many other words he inveighs against this title, as unfit for any christian Bishop, as may be seen at large in his epistles *. And in his epistle to Eulogius, Patriarch of Alexandria, he is displeased that Eulogius writes to him “ by the proud title of universal Bishop, desiring him wholly to forbear that language, for,” saith he, “ that is a diminution to you, which is afforded to another beyond what reason doth require :” And he there tells Eulogius, “ That the council of Chalcedon had offered this title to the old Bishops of Rome, but they would not accept it †;” of which he gives this reason in another epistle——“ because if one Patriarch be called Universal, the name of

* Gregor. Epist. lib. 2. ad Mauriti. Epist. 32, 36, 38.

† Gregor. Epist. lib. 7. Ep. 39.

“ Patriarch

“Patriarch is taken from the rest *.” And so little did Pope Boniface think of deriving his supremacy from Christ, that with intreaty he obtained of the intruding Emperor Phocas to decree, “That the “Roman church should be head of all “churches †,” as the ancient historians witness ‡. But this imperial constitution will scarce justify the supremacy and jurisdiction which the Pope now claimeth over all the world, and it utterly destroys the pretences of a divine right to it.

It would be too tedious to relate at large all the steps by which the Bishops of Rome attained to their present grandeur; I shall therefore only note, that the first ages began early to complain of his encroachments and ambition §, and all succeeding times frequently opposed the Pope’s pre-

* Gregor. Epist. lib. 7. Epist. 36.

† Beda de 6. ætat. Mundi.

‡ Paul. Diacon. rer. Rom. lib. 18.—Histor. Longob. lib. 4. cap. 11.—Anastaf. Bibl. Vit. Bonif. Tertii.—Ado ætat. Sext. Reg. Chron. lib. 1.—Ammon. de gest. Franc. lib. 4. cap. 4.

§ Frimilianus ad Cypr. Ep. 75.

tences herein. The sixth council of Carthage allowed not his claim of appeals *; the Bishops of France complain of his sending a legate to dedicate a Church there, as an undue act, contrary to the ancient canons, and all primitive constitutions, "For though," saith the historian, "the Bishop of Rome, for the dignity of his apostolical seat, be more venerable than other Bishops, yet it is not lawful for him in any thing to transgress the tenour of canonical rules; and as every Bishop of the orthodox church is the spouse of his own See, and represents the person of our Saviour, so it cannot agree to any Bishop, boldly to act any thing in the Diocese of another †;" the like checks the Popes frequently received for meddling in France, from the Princes of that nation ‡. About that time also the Bishops of Italy complained of the Roman usurpation to the

* Concil. 6. Carthag. an. 419.

† Glaber Rodolph. hist. lib. 2. cap. 4.

‡ Vita Ludov. Pii a P. Pithæo edit an. 863.—Annal. Franc. a P. Pithæo eod. an.

Patriarch of Constantinople, as appears by Photius' letter, in answer to that complaint, extant in Cardinal Baronius*. And there are many like examples in the historians of those ages, wherein this bold jurisdiction began first to be exercised in this western part of Europe†. And to this very day the churches of France do little value the Pope's supremacy, though in other opinions they agree with the Roman church, as may be seen in the French writers‡. And it is not long since the King of France was about to take away his nation's dependence from Rome, by erecting the Archbishopric of Burges into a Patriarchate. And now, why should you be awed into the belief of evil and inconvenient doctrines by a pretended supremacy, not given by Christ, not challenged by the best Popes, not acknowledged

* Photius Constant. Ep. Encycl. ap. Baron. an. 863. sec. 42.

† Constit. Imper. a Godalsto, tom. 1. pag. 24, 25.—Luitprand. Ticin. hist. lib. 6. cap. 9 & 10.

‡ Bochart, lib. 5. de Decret. Eccles. Gallic. tit. 20.—Pithæus de lib. Eccles. Gallican. cap. 3. sec. 3. n. 13.

by the first Christians, nor much regarded by some catholic countries? Why should you be enslaved by an authority gained by fraud and policy, confirmed by force and cruelty, enlarged by dividing christian Princes, by the undermining the empire, and oppressing many ecclesiastical and temporal persons in their just rights? Why should you fear to renounce an usurped jurisdiction, since "what is unjustly seized on at first, can never be legally enjoyed, nor is it confirmed by the longest prescription of time*," as the civil law speaks? I must confess I cannot see that any Christians, without the pale of his own Diocese, are obliged to own him further than by the respect due to a Bishop of an ancient Patriarchal See, nor so far neither if he be not content with his own, and keep not close to the primitive faith.

* LL. Basilic. lib. 10. tit. 1. & Balsamon. not. in Concil. Ancyran. pag. 378.

SECTION VI.

Whether the Pope hath any right to exercise a jurisdiction over England?

BUT since my discourse is directed particularly to the catholics of England, it will be most considerable to enquire, Whether the Roman Bishop can justly claim any authority over them; and, if prejudices were laid aside, I doubt not but to make it evident, that the Pope neither hath nor ought to have any authority over this nation. For, first, let it be considered that "Britain was the first of the provinces which did publicly profess the faith of Christ," faith Sabellicus*, which is also attested by other more ancient writers†: So that it is agreed on all hands, here was a true and perfect church of Christ near five hundred years before

* Sabellic. Enn. 7. lib. 5.

† Tertul. adv. Jud. c. 7.--Theodoret. de cur. Græc. aff. Ser. 9.

they

they had any communication with the Bishop of Rome, or knew one syllable of this foundation-article of the modern faith of that church, *viz.* of the Pope's universal supremacy. It is also certain the church of Britain was not subject to Rome at the time of the first general council at Nice; and in the sixth canon of that council it is decreed concerning the three Patriarchs' jurisdictions, "That the ancient custom should be established, that Egypt, Libya and Pentapolis should be subject to the Bishop of Alexandria, because the Bishop of Rome had the like custom, and likewise so it was at Antioch; and in other Provinces the privileges should be preserved to their churches, &c. *"

Now the ancient custom and privilege of this church of Britain then was to govern itself without subjection to any foreign Patriarch, and the Pope could not usurp any dominion here afterwards, without transgressing this canon of the most famous general council; especially if we

* Can. 6. Concil. Nicæn. juxt. Dionys. Exig.

consider how this canon was expounded in Rufinus's days, *viz.* "That Rome should have the government of the Suburbicarian churches *." And the ancient survey of the Imperial Provinces will tell you what the Suburbicarian Region was, *viz.* Three Islands, Sicily, Sardinia, and Corfica, and part of Italy, from the East-end to the border of Tuscany westward: And this was all the ancient extent of the Roman Bishop's jurisdiction, the rest of Italy being under the Metropolis of Milan, which church of old paid no subjection to Rome; much less could any be due to him from Britain. Again, in the third general council of Ephesus *an.* 431, it was decreed, "That in all Dioceses and Provinces it should hereafter be observed, That no Bishop should henceforward lay hold of another Province, which had not formerly and from the beginning been under the power of their predecessors †;" which

* Histor. Eccles. lib. 1. c. 6.

† Council. Ephes. Can. 8.

canon the Pope must break also, before he can assume a power over the church of Britain, which, with the Island of Cyprus and some other places, was its own head, as those times phrased it, and subject to no foreign Patriarch: So that when Augustine the Monk, coming over to convert the Pagan Saxons, required the British Bishops to profess subjection to the See of Rome; they did by virtue of these canons refuse it, telling him, "They had a Patriarch of their own, to whom alone they were subject in spiritual things under God:" And Dinothus, Abbot of Banchor, by divers arguments shewed, "They owed no subjection to the Roman Bishop," as an old historian informs *; and accordingly the British Bishops retained their old rites different from Rome, and kept their old privileges, being consecrated by the Archbishop of St. Davids, and he by his own suffragans, "making no profession of subjection to any other Church," saith their

* Geofr. Monm: de Aug: vers. fin.

historian, * which continued till the days of King Henry the first. The Saxons indeed showed more respect to Rome, because it had assisted in their conversion; hence they sometimes asked advice of the Pope, as of an eminent neighbour Patriarch, but their Bishops never professed subjection to Rome, nor did they own his supremacy, or look on him as an infallible Judge, as appears by their not obeying the Pope's decree made in a Roman council, about restoring Wilfrid to his Archbishopric of York, *an.* 680; and though the Pope had confirmed and recommended the canons of the second Nicene council about images, the English church rejected and despised them, writing a book to condemn Image-worship, in the name of all the Princes and Bishops of England, and sending it to Charles the Great of France, by the learned Alcuinus, as our histories do attest †. And more-

* Gyrald. Camb. Itin. l. 2. c. 1.

† Hoved. Annal. part. 1. pag. 405.—Matth. Westm. *an.* 793.

over it is evident that all ecclesiastical laws were then made by the Saxon Kings and Bishops, in their provincial councils, by their own authority, and often without so much as acquainting the Pope therewith, or desiring his consent thereto, or confirmation thereof. The Popes indeed about the latter end of the Saxon times began to degenerate in manners, and aim at high things in all the western world: but this pride was checked here, even as, ~~as~~ we showed before, it was in other places: for when that insolent Pope Hildebrand, who first presumed to depose an Emperor*, took the boldness to require fealty of King William the Conqueror, he answered him in this manner, "Fealty I
" neither have acknowledged, nor will I
" do it, because neither did I promise it,
" nor do I find that my Predecessors ever
" did it to your Predecessors," as appears by the Conqueror's letter still extant †; and when by policy and evil arts he had

* Onuphrius in Vit. Greg. 7.

† Baron. Annal. an. 1076 § 25.

made some encroachments here, yet still his power was esteemed no other than a temporal power, permitted by the favour of our Kings, not due by any original right: Hence the historian saith, "That King Henry the first, having subdued all his enemies, feared none but the Pope, and that, not for his spiritual, but his temporal power *;" and an old record affirms that King Henry the second smartly asked the Bishop of Chichester, "How he durst argue for the Pope's authority which was granted by men, against his royal power derived from God †?" The turbulent and seditious attempts of Thomas Becket and his faction about that time, to subject the English clergy to the Pope, are sufficiently known; but if our ancestors (whom you call Roman catholics) had been of your opinion in this great article of faith, they would not have made so stout an opposition against the Pope's Supremacy as they did: It being apparent that the whole body of the nation then

* Matth. Paris. an. 1107.

† Record. an. tertio Hen. II.

looked

looked on it as an encroachment and an usurpation; for in the famous statutes of Clarendon they condemn it, decreeing among other things, "That all the clergy should *bona fide*, swear to the King; and none should appeal, but unto the Archbishop, or from him finally to the King, without particular license *." And to restrain his meddling here, the Kings of England declared, they had a right to forbid the Pope's legates from entering into this land, and often did prohibit them (even Queen Mary herself exercising this power) yea, it was adjudged in a parliament 25 Ed. III. "to be treason to bring in the Pope's Bulls here without the King's consent," *Stat. de provisor*. though the sending these be an act of spiritual jurisdiction. But it is plain they would not allow the Pope in those days to exercise spiritual jurisdiction here without the King's leave; for his very excommunicating certain English Bishops in a parliament 16th of Rich. II. is declared to tend "to the open disherison of the Crown,

* Matth. Paris. an. 1164.

" and

“and the destruction of the King, his
“law, and all his realms;” and a little
after it is affirmed there, that the
Pope’s attempts “be clearly against the
“King’s crown and regality,” used and
approved in the time of all his Progeni-
tors*; finally, therefore, they all promise
stand with the King against all such en-
croachments with their very lives. And if
you be well versed (as becometh English-
men) in the histories and statutes of your
own country, you must needs know that
the authority which the Pope once exer-
cised here, was gotten by taking advan-
tages of the necessities of our Kings, and
the divisions among the people; and in
those times which are accounted most
Popish, it was checked by laws, com-
plained of in Parliament, and thought an
oppression by the wisest and greatest sub-
jects; so that the most noble Hen. de Lacy
Earl of Lincoln, in his dying speech to his
son in law Thomas Earl of Lancaster, said
among other things, “That the church of
“England, heretofore honourable and free,

* Stat. 16 Ric. 2di, Statute Book pag. 238.

“ was

“ was now enslaved by Romish oppres-
 “ sions;” charging him, to “ stand up
 “ like a man for the honour of God and
 “ the church, and the redemption of his
 “ country *.” And the same author tells
 us, that it was debated in a council at
 London *an.* 1408, “ Whether all payments
 “ and obedience to the Pope should not be
 “ taken away †;” which shows, they
 thought it in the power of this nation to
 take away his authority here when they
 pleased: And they retained it, not as
 being necessarily or originally due to him,
 but only in respect of his being a Bishop
 of an ancient apostolical seat, as is evident
 from those instructions which King Henry
 the fifth gave to his ambassadors, sent to
 Pope Martin the fifth, bidding them, if
 they perceived any delay in their affairs,
 to tell the Pope, “ that their master the
 “ King, if he yielded not to his demands,
 “ would use his own power in these par-
 “ ticulars, for he did not apply himself to

* Tho. of Walsing, *an.* 1312. p. 74 num. 20.

† Tho. Walsing *an.* 1408. p. 420.

“ Rome

“Rome out of necessity, but for respect
“fake *.” And therefore when this per-
missive authority grew uneasy to those
who had endured it for some time, it was
rejected much more legally than ever it
was introduced, *viz.* by the regal power
with the advice and consent of the Lords
and Commons in Parliament †. And this
is to be noted, the clergy and laity of this
parliament did hold most of the opinions
of the Roman church in other things, and
yet consented to the abolishing the Pope’s
usurped power over England, as believing
it to be an unjust encroachment; and
Stephen Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester,
a great persecutor of the Protestants, did
then make a learned oration *de vera obe-*
dientia, showing that the King was by
right and by God’s law the supreme head
of this church of England.

And now, that I may not only confute
a false opinion, but establish the true, let
me intreat you impartially to consider,

* Vita Henr. Chichely, pag. 56, & 57.

† An. 26. Hen. VIII.

that

that as it appears the Pope is not *de jure* supreme head of this church of England, so it is as evident, that the King of England is the supreme head of the churches in his own dominions; for indeed all christian Princes are, or ought to be so in their own dominions; whence it was that Constantine the Great did retain the title of Pontifex Maximus “without any blot “to his christianity,” saith Baronius*; and the highest appeals in all controversies ecclesiastical, even in matters of faith, were made to him, though he used the assistance and counsel of his Bishops for determining them. And it is evident that he and his successors, as Cusanus before confesseth, did call and preside in all general councils, and ratified their decrees, which were no laws till they were stamped with the Imperial authority; yea, the Imperial code sufficiently witnesses, that the Emperours made laws concerning Religion, the whole third book of Justinian’s Basilicks being nothing else but Imperial constitutions, *de Episcopis, Clericis & Sacris*.

* Annal. tom. 3. an. 312.

L

They

They also erected Patriarchates, and gave them supreme ecclesiastical jurisdiction over such provinces as they pleased, as at Justinianopolis in Dacia *, and at Ravenna in Italy itself †, which had no dependence on Rome till the time of Constantinus Pogonatus ; and “ all ecclesiastical affairs depended on the Emperours,” saith Socrates ‡, so that Pope Anastasius calls the Emperour Anastasius, “ The vicar of God “ by the divine command presiding over “ the earth §.” An authority like this also was exercised by the western Emperours of the French line, being styled, “ The rulers of the true Religion,” a title given to Charles the Great and to Ludovicus by two several councils which they had called || ; and the present French Kings do claim the supremacy over the French churches, as may be seen in Be-

* Imperial. Const. Novel. II. & Nov. 131. c. 3.

† Rescript. Valent. 31. an. 432.

‡ Socrat. Hist. Præm. ad lib. 5.

§ Anastas. Pap. Epist. ad Anastas. Imp. ap. Binium T. 2. par. 1. pag. 507.

|| Concil. I. Mogun. an. 813. & Concil. II. Mogun. an. 847. ap. Bin. T. 3 p. 1, sec. 2.

chellus and P. Pithæus cited before, *sect.* 5; one of the French writers telling us it is the opinion of this nation, that “ *Le Roi* “ *assisté de son conseil d’etat est apres Dieu Chief* “ *Terrien de l’Eglise de son Royaume & ne pas* “ *le Pape* *.” And it may be proved concerning other christian Princes, that they allow not the Pope to impose his decrees on their kingdoms, nor to exercise any jurisdiction among them but by their special license and consent, and prohibit his exercising any power over their subjects when they please: And why may not the King of England, being a free and absolute Monarch, be allowed as great a privilege in his own dominions? Do you not tell us, that Pope Eleutherius called King Lucius by the title of vicar of Christ †; and doth not King Edgar call himself Christ’s vicar ‡, and none taxed this title then? Did not the Saxon Kings preside in all national councils, and make

* Claud. Fauchet en les Libertés de l’Eglis. Gallican. pag. 234.

† Epist. Eleuth. ad R. Lucium ap. Spelm.

‡ Leg. Hydenf. cap. 8. Spelm. tom. 1. pag. 438.

laws for Religion by the advice of their own Bishops, by their own authority? Did they not erect new sees for Bishops, and change them as they saw fit? Did they not invest all "Bishops by delivering the ring and pastoral staff *?" And the same power was still exercised by King William the Conqueror, for "all things both divine and human depended on his order," saith an old historian†. And when the Pope began to encroach upon the King's supremacy here in England, he was generally opposed as we noted before. And in the aforesaid Parliament of Richard the second, the nation declared, "That they would not endure that the Crown of England should be submitted to the Pope, and the laws and statutes of this realm by him defeated and avoided at his pleasure ‡:" for Bracton our most famous lawyer affirms, that "the Kings of England have no supreme on earth but God:" And

* Ingulph. hist. pag. 902.

† Eadmer. hist. pag. 6.

‡ Stat. 16 Ric. II. cap. 5.

accordingly the Kings and Parliaments of this nation made laws in reference to Religion as they saw expedient, and among the rest they enacted many laws in a direct opposition to the Pope's spiritual, as well as temporal jurisdiction, declaring thereby, that "they esteemed him no head of this church, but an ambitious and dangerous encroacher upon the rights of the Crown," as you will find by perusal of those several statutes cited in the margin*. By which laws long since enacted, it is declared to be treason to receive or harbour any agents or emissaries from Rome against the King's proclamations, and without his special license: Upon all which considerations the Judges have declared, that the act of Parliament for "restoring the supremacy over the church unto the Crown, was not the introducing a new law, but a declaration of the old †;" for it was many hundred years before,

* Stat. 25 Ed. III. de Provisor.—Stat. 27, 28, Ed. III. c. 1, 2.—Stat. 28 Ed. III. c. 3.—Stat. 2 Hen. IV. c. 3.—Stat. 6 Hen. IV. c. 1.—Stat. 7 Hen. IV. c. 6.—Stat. 3 Hen. V. c. 4.

† Coke 5. Rep. Cawdry's Case, fol. 8.

that King Henry the second did declare, "That he would account it high-treason in any man that should affirm the Pope's authority was above his *." And before that, Anselm was told, "That it was impossible for him to keep the faith which he owed to the King, and to pay obedience to the Pope contrary to his Royal pleasure †." Which, methinks, may fitly admonish you, who do own the Pope's supremacy over England, and yet glory much in your loyalty to the King, to enquire how these two can stand together: Our Saviour saith, "No man can serve two masters," *Matth.* vi. 24, however not two supreme Lords, neither can there be two highest powers in one kingdom, nor can any subjects obey both, since they will sometimes command contrary things. 'Tis true, if the Roman Bishop would profess to our King, as his Predecessor Leo the fourth did to Lotharius of France, "Concerning your Capitulars or Imperial precepts, we, through

* Spelm. Concil. T. 2. p. 58.

† Rex ad Anselm. ap. Eadmerum. pag. 62.

" the

“ the assistance of Christ, promise as much
“ as we are able, to keep and conserve the
“ same for ever *.” If he would acknowledge himself subject to our King in his dominions, as his Predecessors were to the Emperours of old ; if he behaved himself toward his Majesty, as St. Gregory did to Mauritius, who calls that Emperour his Lord, and himself his servant, declaring, that “ he was subject to the Emperour’s
“ commands, and accordingly had done
“ his duty in publishing a law, which the
“ Emperour ordered him to promulge,
“ though for his own part he thought it
“ not agreeable to the laws of God † ;” if the present Popes claimed no more than a Primacy of order and precedence among other Bishops, then the case might easily be determined : But you know of later times the pretences of Rome are much higher, for she challenges a supremacy over all christian Princes, a power to depose them, an authority to abrogate or

* Leon. Epist. ad Lothar. & Lud. Aug. ap. Grat. dist. 10. cap. 9.

† Gregor. Epist. lib. 2. ad Maurit. Ep. 62.

dispense

dispense with their laws, and absolve their subjects from their allegiance, a privilege to be appealed unto as to the last and highest tribunal on earth; so that Clement the fifth is recorded in the acts of the council of Vienna to have said, "That all the right of Kings depended on him alone * ;" and Boniface the eighth owned himself not only "Lord of France, but of all the world †," for "so great was the impudence of this Boniface," saith the French chronologer, "that he presumed to affirm the kingdom of France was a Fee of the Papal Majesty ‡." And as to this kingdom, Pope Innocent the fourth saith, "That the King of England was his vassal and his slave §," and they esteem England also a Fee of the Papacy, and so is Ireland too it seems. Whereupon the Pope hath dared to nominate a King of Ireland, and hath given away the kingdom of England to those

* Concil. Vienn. sub Clem. 5.

† Papyr. Maffon. Vit. Bonif. 8.

‡ Tilius Episc. Meld. Chronic. de Reg. Fran. an. 1302.

§ Matth. Paris. ad an. 1253.

who

who attempted to conquer it ; he hath condemned our laws, excommunicated and deposed our Princes, and absolved the subjects of England from their allegiance ; upon which, both formerly and in our times, many of your party have entered into bloody conspiracies and open rebellion : So that now it appears, the Pope claims an absolute supremacy over our King and his Realms, and how he can be a good subject of the King of England, who professes obedience to this foreign princely Prelate, is very hard to be understood. If you believe this claim, and own the Pope to be above the King, you must then obey him, even when his orders contradict those of your lawful Sovereign, and so you are the Pope's subjects, not the King's ; nor can his Majesty have any security of your allegiance any longer than it pleases the Roman Bishop, so that he reigns over you at the Pope's mercy. I know many of you English catholics have so loyal an affection for the King, that your church-men are forced to invent many plausible pretences to persuade you,
that

that the supremacy claimed by the Pope doth not entrench upon the King's supremacy, telling you, that you need not obey the Pope if he commanded you to fight against your King; wherein they put a fallacy upon you, for they know the Pope can excommunicate and depose him (even for a "very small matter," say your Canonists*) and then he is no longer your King. They pretend further, this supremacy over Kings in temporals, "is not the doctrine of your church, but only of some Jesuits," upon whom they lay all those foul doctrines of deposing and murdering Kings, so wickedly maintained by divers eminent writers of your church†. But this is a delusion also, for when or where did the Pope, or the heads of the Roman church, condemn these opinions, or suppress these seditious books, nay, on the contrary, the books are approved, and the authors preferred at Rome, even when

* Gloss. in Decret. dist. 40. cap. 6. Si Papa.

† Mariana. lib. de Rege.—Suarez defens. Fidei, & lib. contr. Regem Magn. Britan.

France condemns them *. And those honest and loyal secular English priests that have ventured to write against this usurped power of the Popes over Kings in temporals, (though they held his supremacy here in spirituals) have been persecuted almost to death by the Roman Bishop; they have been suspended, and their books condemned, and their persons so odiously represented, that no English catholics durst harbour them; witness the learned F. Preston, under the name of Roger Widdrington, in King James's days, with his fellow-priests; and Peter Walshe, author of the *Letter to the catholics*, who is at this day a great sufferer by the Pope's means, merely for writing, that you of the Roman church ought to be loyal to the King in all matters of temporal cognizance; a clear evidence, that, whatever your church may pretend, they will not endure that any of you catholics shall hold the King's power to be above the Pope's in any thing; and consequently they will not allow you to be good subjects.

* Answer to Philanax Anglicus, 125.

Now

Now to sum up all these particulars, how grievous an abuse is it for a foreign Prelate, whose Predecessors had no authority here at all, to usurp such a power over you as to impose new and inexpedient articles upon you? Why should you enslave yourselves to him that cannot have so much as a spiritual jurisdiction here without breaking the canons of the most famous general councils? Why may you not take the same liberty to oppose his decrees, that your ancestors in all ages have done? they, whom you account good catholics, rejected his doctrines sometimes, despised his bulls and excommunications frequently, and always opposed his pretended claim of a supremacy over this nation. Why should you call that an article of faith, and account it the principal point of Religion, *viz.* "That England ought to be subject to "Rome," which, even in those you call catholic times, was declared to be no less than treason, and no other than an opinion that did destroy the prerogative of the King, the privileges and liberties of this church, the freedom and quiet of all English

glish subjects? They were Romanists in other points who condemned appeals to Rome, and maintained, that the Crown of England was in no earthly subjection, and that the King had no supreme but God only; who counted all the power which the Pope ever had here, merely permissive, tolerated by this nation so long as they pleased, and such as might be curbed, lessened, hindered, or taken away by the supreme authority of this nation whenever they saw expedient: It was a King and Parliament of your Religion in most points, that restored the King to his just supremacy, and took away the precarious or usurped and much abused power of the Roman Bishop here; they thought a supremacy in spirituals, as to this kingdom, was more than he had any right to, but he and his agents expect to be allowed to over-rule the temporal laws also. Methinks, if you have the nobleness and gallantry of true English spirits, your affections for the Roman church should not rob you of your love to your native country, nor suffer you to endure those pre-

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tences

tences which dishonour the King, and despoil him of his ancient rights, and enslave this free church and nation to one that only seeks his own ends in claiming this subjection; for though the holding the Pope's supremacy doth contribute to the support of his own grandeur, yet it doth not further any man's salvation, and it is so far from doing any good in those nations where it is allowed him, that it might be made appear, the setting up and abetting this supremacy hath occasioned the murder of many Princes, stirred up the complaints of all sorts of people, and filled Christendom for many ages, with massacres, treasons, war, and bloodshed*; which was so notorious in the German empire, that it came to be a Proverb, saith Guicciardine, *It is the property of the church to hate the Cæsars*. And the mischief it hath done in England, by rifling the nation's wealth before the Reformation, and disturbing its quiet since, is so well remembered and so deeply resented, by the generality of the people, that they will never

* See the Answer to Philanax Angl. chap. iv. p. 72.

endure that heavy yoke any more, nor can they be persuaded scarce ever to esteem them loyal subjects, or true to their country's interest, who do not renounce this unjust and odious jurisdiction. Why therefore, O my friends, will you be so imprudent, to oppose the rights and prerogative of your lawful Sovereign, the privileges of that church wherein you were born, the freedom and interest of your beloved country, the desire of your fellow-subjects and best friends, yea, and your own liberty also? Why will you oppose, I say, all these, merely to support an unjust and groundless power, which no Ecclesiastic ought to have any where, much less in so remote and so free a Monarchy? to support a power which is inconsistent with the security of the Crown, the peace of the kingdom, and the welfare of private persons? St. Peter never bid any to honour his successor the Pope thus, but his opinion was, "that you must submit to the King as supreme," 1 Pet. ii. 13. and his counsel follows thereupon, viz. that you should "fear God and honour

“the King,” *ver.* 17. St. Paul commands “every soul to be subject to the higher powers,” *Rom.* xiii. 1. Neither Bishops nor Apostles themselves are excepted, saith St. Chrysostome ; and Saint Bernard tells Pope Eugenius, that the Apostles were forbid to exercise dominion *, and therefore he adds, “If you would have apostolical and royal power together, you lose both †.” Finally, therefore, it is unreasonable for the Roman Bishop to challenge such authority here, and the laws of God and man forbid it, so that I may expect you shall be so far from receiving any articles for the sake of this authority, that you shall not scruple to renounce the authority itself, which was so ill-gotten at first, so wretchedly abused while it did obtain, and so legally taken away at last ; and in so doing you will demonstrate yourselves to be loyal to your King, faithful to your country, friends to your own liberty, and men of an un-inflaved understanding.

* Luke xxii. 25, 26.

† Bern. ad Eugen. Pap. de confid. lib. 2.

SECTION VII.

Advice to the English catholics to forsake the opinions of Rome, and embrace the religion of the church of England.

TO conclude, as my pity to see you so miserably imposed on hath moved me to endeavour by these plain and cogent arguments to rescue you from that yoke, which neither we nor our fathers were able to bear; so my desire of your perfect freedom, and my unfeigned wishes for your temporal, spiritual, and eternal welfare, do prompt me to advise you to comply with the Religion of the church of England, and this advice is not only grounded upon the foregoing considerations, but may be farther pressed upon these motives:

I. If you consider the excellent method of our Reformation, which was so necessary at that time, that for some ages be-

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fore,

fore, the wisest and best men of the Roman church had not only confessed there was great need of it, but had complained for want thereof, and pressed the Pope earnestly thereunto; witness the judicious epistle of Rob. Groshead, that pious Bishop of Lincoln, to Pope Innocent the fourth, yet to be seen in our historians *, the public complaint of the English church in the council of Lyons †, the private writings of John Gerson, Nich. Clemangis, Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope, and many others: And at least one hundred years before Luther's time a Reformation was urged for in the Pisane council ‡, and that so strongly, that before the election of a Pope, the Cardinals solemnly promised, "Whoever of them should be chosen
 " Pope, that he would, before the dissolution of that council, reform the catholic
 " church as well in the head as the members §." And when Alexander the fifth

* Matth. Paris, an. 1253.

† Ap. Binium Concil. tom. 3. pag. 2. fol. 729, &c.

‡ Concil. Pisanum, an. 1411.

§ Concil. Pisan. sess. 16.

was chosen, “ he promised to take care of
 “ a general Reformation, and that pious
 “ and learned men should be chosen in
 “ every nation to treat with the Cardinals
 “ about it : * ” But after all, neither he
 nor his successors would ever reform ei-
 ther their doctrines or practices, being
 more intent upon their private advantage,
 than the general good, and more moved
 with Cardinal Scomberg’s counsel, than
 by all the former complaints, who told
 the Pope, “ That by the Reformation it
 “ would be confessed that the things pro-
 “ vided against, were deservedly reprov’d
 “ by the Lutherans, which would be a
 “ great abetting to their whole doctrine † ,”
 which is to resolve to err always, rather
 than to be thought to have once erred ;
 and herein the Roman church is of the
 same humour with those Gentiles to whom
 Arnobius speaks, “ What you have once
 “ done without reason, ye defend, lest you
 “ should seem formerly to have been ig-

* Et Seff. 20. ap. Binium, tom. 3. p. 2. p. 836.

† Hist. Conc. Trent. lib. 1, p. 83.

“ norant,

“norant, and you account it better not
“to be overcome, than to yield to plain
“and confessed truth *.” Wherefore,
since Rome resolved not to reform, Eng-
land, having first restored her King to his
ancient and just supremacy, resolved to
reform itself, without the Pope’s leave or
consent, knowing full well they had au-
thority sufficient among themselves to or-
der the affairs of Religion, which had been
regulated many hundred years in this land
by the King and his own Bishops, without
any dependence on the Pope at all; thus
the Kings of Judah reformed their king-
doms of old; thus the King of Spain,
with Leander Bishop of Sevil, reformed
that kingdom from Arianism without the
Pope †, and thus King Edgar intended to
proceed in the Reformation of the English
church of old, when he told his own
clergy, “I have Constantine’s sword in
“my hands, and you have Peter’s in
“yours ‡;” that is, we need no farther

* Arnob. adv. gentes, lib. 6. p. 197.

† Conc. Tolet. 3. an. 589.

‡ Edgar. Ap. Ailred. Col. 361.

authority or power to reform, than what we have within ourselves. The Kings of this nation, with the advice and consent of their Bishops, Barons and Commons, had been always wont to order ecclesiastical affairs as they thought meet, not heeding whether the Pope were pleased or displeased thereat; and accordingly this happy Reformation was made by the supreme power of this kingdom, upon mature deliberation, in a regular, orderly, and legal way; and it was managed with so much moderation and prudence, that the Romanists of England said little against it, but communicated with this church, after the Reformation, till the Pope for his own ends forbid them so to do; but I hope his prohibition, without any just reason, shall not outweigh the supreme authority of your own nation with you, who profess yourselves to be loyal subjects, and for the interest of England; and since there was such need of Reformation, such obstinacy in Rome, such authority here, and so orderly proceedings in this Reformation, I think all good christians and
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sober men, being natives of this land, ought to submit unto it.

II. You will be farther persuaded hereunto, by considering the doctrine of this church, which agrees with primitive christianity, in that it obliges you to believe nothing as of necessity to salvation, but what may be plainly proved out of holy scripture; and for this reason you must still hold the three Creeds, of the Apostles, of Nice, and of St. Athanasius, all which the church of England intirely believes; “and he only is a heretic which follows “not this holy rule,” say the Constitutions of Theodosius and Gratian, “but they are “catholics that embrace it.” In this church we give as much honour to, and obey more canons of, the first four general councils, than they of Rome do; we approve of that exposition of scripture which hath the consent of the fathers of the first three or four centuries, yea, we hold all that the church of Rome itself held as necessary to salvation for five or six hundred years together. And it is very remarkable that a
Romanist

Romanist may turn Protestant without adding any one article to his faith, but a Protestant cannot turn to Rome unless he embrace many new articles ; for our doctrines are generally confessed by both sides to be true, but those of the Roman church are rejected by our Reformers, as novel additions, and such as have no good foundation in scripture, nor genuine antiquity ; and therefore the protestant doctrines are the surer and safer, as in which both sides agree ; for example, We and they both hold there are two states after this life, heaven and hell, but they add a third, which is purgatory, and this we deny : We and they both say, that sins are to be remitted by the merits of Christ's death, but they add the merits of the saints, and their own satisfactions with the merit of their own good works, which we deny to be expiatory, or such as can merit remission for us : We hold there be two sacraments, baptism and the eucharist, these they confess are the chief, but add five more, to which we affirm the name of sacraments doth not properly belong : We say

say that God alone is to be worshipped, they confess he is chiefly to be worshipped; but then they say the blessed Virgin Mary, angels, and faints are to be worshipped also, which additions we deny: We say Christ is our only mediator and advocate, they confess he is principally so, but add, that faints and angels are so in an inferior manner, which we utterly deny: We say Christ is really present in the sacrament of the altar, this they confess, but add, he is corporally there by the Transubstantiation of the bread, &c. and this we deny: We say the scriptures are the rule of faith, and they will not absolutely deny it, but add their own traditions, which we reject: We say there are XXII. books of the old testament canonical, and they confess these all to be so, but they add divers, and call them canonical, which we affirm to be apocryphal. I could give more instances, but these may suffice to shew that the protestant doctrines look most like the ancientest, as being received by both parties, but the Roman opinions are novel enlargements added to the old catholic truths, so
that

that a Protestant becoming a Romanist must take up many articles barely upon the credit of that church, and begin to believe many things anew, questioned by the bigger part of Christendom; but a Romanist turning Protestant retains all the old essentials of his former faith, and doth only become a primitive Roman catholic.

III. The discipline and government of the church of England are more agreeable to primitive patterns than those of the present Roman church are. Our King hath the same power that the religious Kings of Judah had, the same which the great Constantine and the succeeding Emperors for many years enjoyed, the same power which the ancient Kings of this nation exercised, *viz.* a power to convene his clergy, and advise with them about affairs of the church; a power to ratify that which the Bishops and Clergy agree upon, and give it the force of a law; a power to chuse fit persons to govern the church; a power to correct all offenders against faith or manners, be they clergy or

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laymen; and finally, a power to determine all causes and controversies, ecclesiastical and civil, among his own subjects, (by the advice of fit counsellors) so as there lies no appeal from his determination; and this is what we mean when we call him "supreme Governour of this church," which our King must needs be, or else he cannot keep his kingdoms in peace. Besides, for spiritual jurisdiction and sacred administrations, we have a Patriarch of our own, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of all England, whom Urban the second called "the Pope of the other world *;" and his See was usually styled, "The Chair of the English Patriarch †," and is reckoned among the Patriarchates by a foreign writer ‡; and now his privileges and liberties are restored by law, and his title and authority confirmed; so that there lies no appeal from him but to the King. We have also right reverend Bishops, together with other inferior Priests and Deacons,

* Malmſbury de Pontif. l. 1. de Anfelmo.

† Eadmer. Cant. pag. 113.

‡ Duaren. de benef. lib. 1. cap. 9.

the only primitive and proper orders of the Clergy, who can prove their ordination to be as good as any of the Romish Priests can do *, and are now consecrated and ordained by a more excellent form, and more agreeing to the eldest times; than Rome itself can shew; and, if you will judge impartially, it must be confessed that the Clergy of England are altogether as learned, and generally more painful and pious than in any catholic country whatsoever: Our canons for ecclesiastical government are all founded on the canons of ancient councils, (as I could shew by particular induction, if time would permit) and for the exercise of our discipline; it is managed with more moderation, and ease to the people than that of the Roman church is.

IV. You may consider our divine service and sacred administrations, which, as far as ever God made necessary to salvation, may be had in this church. We have the holy scriptures plainly trans-

* Masón de Ministerio Anglicano.

lated, learnedly interpreted, and practically preached; we have daily prayers, by a form so grave and so agreeable to the undoubted parts of ancient liturgies, that it may challenge all Christendom to produce any thing so consonant to the purest primitive devotions; a form, which hath all those parts of the Roman offices which were known and used in the first three centuries, but wants all the innovations and corruptions of the present Mass; and is used in English for the benefit of the meanest christian in our assemblies. We have also those two sacraments which Christ ordained, and many of the elder and later doctors own no more*; as for the other five rites, falsely called sacraments, viz. confirmation, matrimony, holy orders, visiting of the sick, repentance and satisfaction for wrongs done, we retain these, but not by the name of sacraments, keeping the primitive and main part of them, only attended with fewer ceremonies. We

* Ambros. lib. de Sacram.—Aug. Doctrin. Christ. lib. 3. cap. 9.—Paschasius de Cœn. Dom.—Bessarion. de Sacram. Euchar.

press and practice also charity and good works, as much as the Roman church doth, and it may be demonstrated that more and greater gifts have been given in England to pious uses, by private persons since the Reformation, than in two centuries before; and though we dare not say we shall merit eternal life by them, (because that is the gift of God) yet we believe none can come to heaven without good works: In a word, the church of England worships God as He hath prescribed in holy scripture, She commands all that He enjoins, and forbids all that He prohibits, and therefore wanteth nothing that is necessary to salvation.

V. You may look upon our ceremonies, which are few and easy, ancient and significant, and though we do not place so much Religion in externals as the church of Rome doth, yet here is prescribed all that is needful for decency and order, *viz.* That the Clergy always wear grave and distinct habits, and have peculiar garments in divine Administrations; that churches

be adorned and neat; that the people be reverent in God's house; that the memory of our Saviour's chief acts, and the festivals of the holy Apostles be religiously observed; that Lent, with the Vigils of great feasts, the Ember weeks, and all the Fridays in the year, be kept as days of fasting or abstinence; and if some Protestants do not observe them, yet others do, and are commended for it, and you may follow the best, not the most: you will have more liberty, by turning to the English church, as to circumstantial, and greater helps as to the essentials of Religion; so that it is upon all accounts your wisest and safest course to embrace this so true, so primitive, so pious, and so rational a Religion.

Let me therefore shut up my *charitable* and *friendly advice*, by requesting you to consider all these things without prejudice or passion, and then I hope you will perceive how much the Religion of this church excels that of Rome, in antiquity, integrity, and usefulness, and no longer

longer suffer yourselves to be so sadly imposed on, and so miserably made to serve the ends of avarice and ambition : And if you have taken such prudent and pious resolutions, you shall not only be freed from the inconveniences you complain of here, but also have better assurances of your salvation hereafter, than the Roman church can give you ; for there you have only the words of their Priests for it, whose interest, and whose practice it hath been to deceive you ; but here you shall have all the assurances which the word of God can give you, provided you become reformed in your lives as well as in your Religion, and will leave off your *old vices*, as well as your *old opinions* ; for unless we can persuade you to become Profelytes of Righteousness, we shall not much value the gaining you over to our profession ; because we know it is neither the being Papist nor Protestant will save those that live in their sins ; but this Religion is the better chiefly in this, that it is most likely to bring you to unfeigned repentance, and the practice of real holiness. And if you
desire

desire farther information in these particulars, let me advise you to consult the late eminent protestant writers, together with some of the most able and ingenious of the English clergy, whom you will find very willing and ready to give you more full satisfaction, and to be men that have no designs upon you, but to direct you in the best way to Heaven: And, doubtless, if you would but try the difference a-while, a little experience would teach you how happy and advantageous a change he makes, who forsakes the Religion of Rome, and embraces the communion of the church of England.

F I N I S.

